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DAILY MEDITATIONS

ON THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR

BY

McVEIGH HARRISON, O.H.C.

—

VOLUME II.

From Trinity Sunday to the Saturday before Advent Sunday

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

A. V.= Authorized (King James's) Version.
A. V. marg.= "Marginal Readings" edition of the Authorized Version.
R. V.= Revised Version, Oxford edition.
R. V. marg.= marginal reading of the Revised Version.
f.= the next verse in addition to the one cited.
ff.= the next two verses in addition to the one cited.
lit.= literally translated; single quotation marks (' ') also indicate a literal translation, unless explained in the text as inclosing a paraphrase.
All citations are inclusive of the last verse cited.

DAILY MEDITATIONS

Trinity Sunday

The Being of God. Read St. John xvii: 18-24

I. We best express the truth about God's Triune Being when we speak of Him in terms of love. For God *is* love. The Father from all eternity has communicated His Essence, in one infinite, endless, act of love, to the Son,—thus eternally generating Him. The whole Being of the Son flows back in infinite love to the Father, and the Holy Ghost *is* the Personal Love of God uniting thus the Father and Son in One Essence of Love. The Three Divine Persons are One in Being, in Will, and in Mind. The distinctions in the Godhead are for the purpose of love,—that each Person may have a perfect, infinite, eternal Object for that love which is His whole boundless Being in action. For if it were true that God does not love, He would not be personal; indeed He would be lower than the beasts;—

> "For the loving worm within its clod,
> Were diviner far than a loveless God
> Amid his worlds."

Yet for one only Divine Person to love *Himself* would seem to constitute monstrous, infinite selfishness. It is, therefore, only because of plurality in God that He can satisfy the demand of personality; only so can He love and be loved by His Equal.

II. The divine love is so incredibly vast that it has overflowed even the infinite limits of the Trinity, and

so has become the creative activity by which the universe was made. One false philosophy would teach us that God, since He does not need the world, can have no connection with it, nor care for it; an opposite error would have us believe that He needed the universe in order that He might realize Himself through seeing His wisdom reflected in His creation. But the Catholic knows that, while God needed no creature, yet, because it was the nature of His gratuitous charity to communicate itself, He made the world to be an object of His love.

III. Underneath the universe, therefore, are the everlasting Arms of a boundless charity. Even those who reject God are sustained by Him moment by moment, else they would subside into the nothingness from which they came. "If He set His Heart upon Himself, if He gather unto Himself His Spirit and His Breath; all flesh shall perish together" (Job xxxxiv: 14 f., R.V. marg.). But to His own people this God of love has revealed Himself as having the special tenderness of a Nursing-Father, Who carries each soul on His Heart. (Deut. i: 31; Acts xiii: 18, A.V. marg.)

Monday after Trinity Sunday

The Graciousness of God. Read Jonah iv.

I. When an earthly prince shows himself watchful to serve his people even in the little affairs of their peasant lives, and that with the simplicity of love and without any parade of his good offices, we say he is a "gracious sovereign." How gracious, then, is the Blessed Trinity! The Father, to Whom in the Godhead we especially attribute creation, "humbleth

Himself to behold the things that are in Heaven and earth";—

> "Exalting still His holy place,
> Low bending still His eye of grace,
> In heaven above, in earth below."

And in His survey of the universe He has regard to the smallest details. Thus in heathen Nineveh He took loving thought for the speechless infants and even the cattle.

II. To our Saviour the Scriptures refer the establishment of the Catholic Church. It was a menial task for Incarnate God, yet He performed it 'with His whole Heart and His whole Soul' (Jer. xxxii: 38-41), laboring as patiently and faithfully with publicans and sinners, and with His little group of fishermen, as if He had been instructing the highest ranks of the cherubim. Consider, moreover, how at each baptism, even of an eight-days' old baby, immediately He enters into the little heart of His tiny creature, which has but just been reborn of "water and the Spirit."

III. The Scriptures were given under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Yet how little in all the Bible He says about Himself! How perfectly does He fulfil that encomium of our Lord,—"He shall not speak from Himself . . . . He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine and show it into you"! (St. John xvi: 13 f., A.V. marg.). So little, indeed, does He say about Himself, in this Book which He caused to be written for us, that in only one passage is it explicitly revealed that He is God (1 Cor. vi: 19 f.). God grant me that as He is gracious into me, His creature, I may be gracious to all my fellow-men!

Tuesday after Trinity Sunday

The Names of God. Read Exodus iii: 1-14

I. *Jehovah.*—This Name of God, which is a later form of that which He revealed to Moses in our reading, represents His changelessness. For the word "Jehovah," meaning "I am," speaks to us of that eternal stability by which God is the same yesterday and to-day and forever. Our lives are built upon Him, since "we are His offspring" through our creation and re-creation in baptism, and are pledged to glorify Him in all we do with our body and spirit (1 Cor. vi: 20). How stable, then, is our whole future, founded not on our own goodness, which is as a morning cloud (Hos. vi: 4), but on Him Who said, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. iii: 6).

II. *Elohim.*—This name for God signifies multiplied might. He is not only the true basis of our life, but the infinite Power working in and through the Christian. 'I can do all things,' St. Paul boasted, 'in Christ Who giveth me power' (Phil. iv: 13). Man's soul in itself is of no more worth than the filmy mantle of a gas lamp. It is but a frail receptacle for the "Light, which lighteneth every man."

III. *Adonai.*—Frequently in the Old Testament God is addressed by this title, which means "my Lord." How absolutely we belong to God, Christ taught us when he said that when we have done all which God commands us we should say we are unprofitable servants. Yet there is more than this absolute dominion of God over us expressed in His title "my Lord"; there is also suggested the graciousness of a sovereign Who has a personal love for each of His servants. My Lord, indeed, has given His royal promise to reward me for my service, making

Himself my debtor for my every good work. He Who is my King, if He find me His servant "watching" when He comes, 'shall gird Himself, and make me to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve me' (St. Luke xii: 37). I praise that holy queen who with her own hand waited upon the saint she was entertaining. How can I admire enough the graciousness of a God Who will with His own Hands forever serve me, a poor sinner, at His ineffable banquet of love?

Wednesday after Trinity Sunday

God's Holiness and Justice. Read Isa. vi: 1-8

I. The perfection of God's holiness is infinite, so that throughout all eternity we shall never exhaust its glories. Yet, finite as we are, we can obtain some conception of divine sanctity even now by thinking upward from the immaculate angels whom He 'charges with folly' (Job iv: 18), and 'the heavens which are not clean in His sight.' Such inspired suggestions as these may serve to give us a negative idea of God's perfection, since they suggest by contrast His freedom from any imperfection such as must attach to the most perfect creature. But ultimately we must confess, and we glory in the confession, that our God is infinitely more perfect than we can conceive. We hear the praise of His holy seraphim, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts" (Isa. vi: 3), and we know that even these who are shown by their names to be "flames [of divine love]" are expressing with only creaturely weakness and poverty the sanctity of God.

II. Yet God's holiness is not repellent. Saints like Francis of Assisi and Bonaventura have spent whole nights in rapt contemplation of its entrancing

beauty. Saint Catherine of Genoa was permitted to feel one little spark of the love which it inspires in Christain hearts, and this scintilla was so overwhelming that she had to beg our Lord for relief lest she be annihilated by sheer happiness.

III. But there is another result of God's holiness. As its beauty is supremely attractive, so supremely awful is the inevitable severity of the divine justice which follows from it, for God cannot deny Himself. Though He loves with infinite love the souls even of the wicked, yet He must condemn them by the law of His holy nature which is the one standard of righteousness. He cannot but declare the just penalties incurred by those who offend His sanctity, and who never during their period of probation repent of their sin. "Now is the day of salvation," St. Paul urges (2 Cor. vi: 2), and three times over he pleads with us, "To-day if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts." Yet we shall insure God's mercy for ourselves, if we forget our own welfare in so living, interceding and laboring for souls that we help Him shield sinners from His wrath. "For the shields of the earth belong unto God" (Ps. xlvii: 9).

Corpus Christi

The Hidden Manna. Read St. John vi: 49-59

I. Our Lord gave the instruction recorded in our passage in the one synagogue in all the world, it seems, which had over its door the bas-relief of a pot of manna rather than that of a seven-branched candlestick. Recently the remains of this synagogue have been exhumed, and found in remarkable preservation, where the once splendid palaces of the town are now

mere debris defaced beyond recognition. It is as though our Lord meant to preserve a monument of the sermon in which He first explicitly revealed His intention of giving us the Manna of His Blessed Body under veils of bread and wine. And it is peculiarly appropriate that the mysterious food of angels which God rained upon His ancient Church in the wilderness should have been thus used as a type of the Sacrament of Love. "Manna" means "What is it?", suggesting the mysterious nature of this Gift from our Saviour to His Church in her pilgrimage.

II. Even the manna of the wildernesss had great power to preserve the children of Israel through all their long wanderings. Moses reminded them, at the end of the journey through the desert, that their clothing and shoes had not grown old upon them during forty years (Deut. xxix: 5). But our Lord pointed out to the Jews that the Blessed Sacrament far transcends this miraculous virtue of the food given their forefathers. "Your fathers," He said, "did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the Bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. . . . Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

III. The manna fell from the sky each morning until the seventh, but Christ comes to us daily in the Eucharist. The manna fell as the dew, and our Lord said of His Church "*I* will be as the dew unto" My people (Hosea xiv: 5). The bread in the wilderness had every delight and agreed to every taste, we are told, seeming to one as honey (Ex. xvi: 31), and to another like fresh oil (Num. xi: 8). So it is that every person of whatever temperament finds his perfect satisfaction in the Blessed Sacrament. The people of

Gennesaret, with such various ills, received each one the healing, comfort and help which he needed, by touching Jesus, even if it were but the border of His garment. (St. Mark vi: 56.)

Second Day in the Octave of Corpus Christi

The Human Elements in Holy Communion. Read St. Luke ii: 8-12

I. The love of God in the Holy Sacrament appears even in the fact that He shrouds the blessed Presence of Jesus under veils of bread and wine. For (a) in this way He evidences to our senses the inward, invisible Presence of our Lord. It must not be a difficulty to our faith that these outward signs seem very mean to betoken the gift of the Incarnate God. The shepherds were guided to the crib of the Divine Infant by a sign as humble: "Ye shall find the Babe," was the angels' direction, "wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (b) Only because He covers His heavenly glory can we enter the church when He is upon the altar; for if He appeared as He is in Heaven, we would all be striken down and blinded as was Saul on the Damascus Road. (c) It is the highest proof of our Saviour's love that He gives Himself to us under the forms of common food, which may be had in all parts of the world; for thus Christians everywhere may receive Him into their hearts.

II The human weakness of the priest, which would seem so disproportionate to the ineffable power claimed for him of consecrating the Blessed Sacrament, must never be a stumbling-block to my faith. For it is the Spirit of love, in and through the human minister, Who is the real Consecrator (St. John xiv: 17 f.). It is true that the Lord comes at the bidding of the

human priest whenever he will, but in this He only manifests one more proof of His love for my soul in Holy Communion, since He gives me the greatest possible example of humility, obedience, and zeal for the salvation of sinners.

III. I obtain still more evidence of my Saviour's love in the Blessed Sacrament when I consider the nature of the created element which He supplies from His Human Soul, that is, sanctifying grace. For it is the sap of the Sacred Vine, the principle of spiritual life, of which Jesus' Soul is full (St. John i: 14, 16). When I make my communion it is as though I lifted the Chalice of His Humanity to my lips and drank my fill.

Third Day in the Octave of Corpus Christi

The Virtue of the Blessed Sacrament. Read Ezek. xlvii: 1-12

I. The mysterious stream which the prophet saw flowing from under the altar is a type of the grace given our famishing souls in the Blessed Sacrament. Its abundance is great enough to fill and overflow a soul of the deepest capacity. As the prophet found the water up to his ankles, then as he went on, up to his knees, and a thousand cubits further, up to the loins, until presently it was a river to swim in, and could not be passed over, so it is that there is ever more and more grace as we advance in the spiritual life, until with the saints we understand that the supply is inexhaustible,—a river to which there is no further shore.

II. Yet the virtue of the Blessed Sacrament is such that even the realization of the flood of grace it brings gives but a partial notion of it. Not only are salt sea and marsh land in the soul *healed* through

Holy Communion (Ezek. xlvii: 8-11), but Christ Himself comes to beautify it with the flowers of holy virtues. He appeared, it seems, to the Blessed Magdalen as a gardener (St. John xx: 15). It is my soul which He cultivates, planting with His own pierced Hands repentance and love, together with all the lesser blossoms which are so dear to Him.

III. There also He tends and cherishes the vine of His Passion until it brings forth its beautiful fruit in my life. It is as I am nourished by frequent communions that I receive inspiration and power to live as one crucified with Christ. The Blessed Sacrament becomes all in all to me. Having eaten and drunk Christ I thirst always for more of Him (Ecclus. xxiv: 21). Thus shall it be true of me that the zeal of God's House hath eaten *me* up, because the ruling passion of my life shall have become to make my communions with consuming love.

Sunday in the Octave of Corpus Christi

The Foretaste of Heaven. Read 2 St. Peter i: 1-7

I. The "great and precious promises," or "things promised," of which St. Peter speaks, are, principally, the sacraments of Holy Church, among which the chief is the Blessed Eucharist. For by Holy Communion we are made ever more and more "partakers of the Divine Nature," in the only way possible to a creature; that is, by increase of likeness to God through sanctifying grace. Thus we attain "unto life and godliness"; thus we enter upon that glorious progress in goodness which St. Peter outlines in our passage, culminating in charity. The selfishness of Dives, of which the Gospel to-day tells us, is left far below us and we become, like "Abraham's Bosom" in our

Lord's parable, divinely rich souls which cherish poor Lazarus with something of the mercy and love of God in Heaven.

II. Professor Royce, in a recent book, hopes for the coming into the world of a community which will be filled with divine love, although this can be only through a "miracle of grace," by which our selfish hearts may become instinct with interpretative charity for one another. Now Catholics know that Christ is this Miracle of grace and the Church is the Society which is being filled with the divine love. For One has said, "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." It is our shame as Christians that all men do not find us full of Christ's own life and love. "We are deified," says St. Athanasius, "not by receiving the body of some man, but by receiving the Body of the Word Himself."

III. No human heart can fully understand us save the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

> "Not e'en the tenderest heart, and next our own,
> Knows half the reason why we smile or sigh."

But the close, familiar friendship, the "secret" of the Lord, is with a soul which is striving to be "righteous" through His grace. (Prov. iii: 32.)

Fifth Day in the Octave of Corpus Christi

Preparedness for Communion.

Read Ex. xxiv: 9-11; 1 Cor. xi: 21-29

I. In the vision of God granted to Moses and the elders of Israel, "there was under His feet a paved work of a sapphire stone and as it were the very

Heaven for clearness," or "pureness." This was a revelation to us of the pureness, like that of the spotless Heavens, which our Lord looks to find in the heart whereinto He would enter in Holy Communion. He "laid not His Hand" upon these nobles of His ancient people, but He touches my heart of hearts when I 'see God and eat and drink' at His altar.

II. Even the rude heathen soldiers "went backward, and fell to the ground" before the awful majesty of His Presence (St. John xviii: 6). Let me abase myself to the very earth before Him on His altar-throne. Let me resolve never to approach Him in mortal sin, but to prepare myself for Holy Communion by penitence and confession, lest I should ever by an unworthy communion become "guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord." But I must make a better preparation than merely to be free from sin. I must will to have the most glorious virtues and the greatest merits of the saints to clothe my soul, and especially must I have in myself something of their love and their hunger for Jesus.

III. At the time of receiving Holy Communion let me remember that I am approaching the well of eternal life in the Sacred Heart which is laid open for me to drink my fill (Ps. xxxvi: 9). "No tongue can express," says St. Thomas Aquinas, "the sweetness which the fervent soul finds in the Holy Sacrament. It is enough to say that true spiritual sweetness is drunk at the Fountain Head." Yet if I have a will fraught with penitence and love, I shall not hesitate, even though my emotions are cold. "For if there be first a willing mind," St. Paul teaches us, "it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor. viii: 12).

Sixth Day in the Octave of Corpus Christi

Thanksgiving for Communion.

Read Hab. iii: 17-19; Song of Songs iii: 1-4

I. Our thanksgiving for the Blessed Sacrament ought to be far above that which we so readily make for temporal benefits. Habakkuk was but a Jew, who had never known the inexpressible sweetness of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, yet he counted it far more blessed to have the Lord for his own than to possess great material wealth. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom," he declared, "neither shall fruit be on the vines, the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

II. We must treasure the first few moments after receiving the Holy Sacrament. It is then that our hearts should be full of love for God and for man. It is the time of all times to make an intercession, a resolution, or an act of love. Like the blessed Magdalen we may at least fall down and clasp His sacred Feet, ere He ascend to His Father, although we may not *cling* to Him. Then for a space we ought to give ourselves up to thanksgiving. The Psalmist promised, 'If I may go unto the altar of God, upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord my God.' He was grateful, although he approached only the altar of burnt offering. How much more grateful I ought to be when I have been admitted to the altar of the Divine Holocaust.

III. But the thanksgiving of my Eucharistic *life* is even more essential than my prayers and praise immediately after communion. Let me not receive the

grace of God in vain, nor fritter it away by little faults. Like the bride in her dream, I in glorious reality have "found Him Whom my soul loveth"; let me also be, like her, tenacious of Him, so that I can say, "I held Him and would not let Him go."

Seventh Day in the Octave of Corpus Christi

The Holy Sacrifice. Read St. Luke i: 5-13

I. Our reading to-day describes the one offering which Zacharias had waited all his life to make, although it was only an offering of incense. On this, the greatest occasion of his whole life, he had long planned to ask God for the blessing he most desired; for it was especially a time of prayer, just as is the Eucharist for Catholics. 'The whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.' Now the prayer he made was for a seeming impossibility, for he asked that he and his aged wife should have a child. Yet as he sprinkled the incense upon the coals, performing his priestly office, St. Gabriel appeared by the side of the altar and told him that his petition was heard and that Elizabeth should bear a son in her old age. Suppose there were but one Eucharist for us, as there was only one sacrifice of incense for Zacharias. How we would all flock to that one Service that we might ask our Lord for what we most desired! Yet every Eucharist is as full of divine love and power as if it were the only one, since the Victim of each unbloody Sacrifice is Incarnate God, offering Himself afresh for the souls of His people.

II. At communion, each one of us has the opportunity of pleading Christ's sacrifice, if he will, for

some soul he desires to be greatly blessed. "For," St. Paul instructs us, "as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." Let us often make our communion with the intention of intercession, "Showing," or "offering," our Crucified Redeemer unto His Father, sure that thus we gain His favor for the persons or objects we would help.

III. The Eucharist is our highest and worthiest thanksgiving. "What reward," cries the Psalmist, "shall I give unto the Lord for all the benefits that He hath done unto me? I will receive the cup of Salvation" (Ps. cxvi: 11 f.). And even if we are simply assisting at the Holy Eucharist without communicating, we can still offer to God the "sacrifice of thanksgiving" in accordance with that promise which the sacred writer makes in our name: "the Memorial of Thine abundant kindness shall be showed." (Ps. cxlv: 7.)

Eighth Day in the Octave of Corpus Christi

Visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Read St. John i: 45-51

I. Our Lord's greeting to St. Nathanael showed him that the Divine Eyes had beheld him and had perceived the subject of his meditations while he was under the fig tree in his garden. "Behold an Israelite indeed," Jesus said, "in whom is no guile." In this, as appears from the context, He contrasted his new disciple with guileful Jacob, when he was fleeing from the brother he had deceived, the night he lay and slept at Bethel. For presently, after St. Nathanael had mounted to a higher act of faith, our Lord rewarded him with this promise: "Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending

upon the Son of Man." As Nathanael is in contrast with that other Israelite in whom *was* guile, so also should the vision his eyes of faith would see transcend the vision which Jacob had beheld. The patriarch lay in a "House of God," wherein presently he erected an altar, but the Lord he beheld was the Son of *God*, in *Heaven*, and the angels only *ascended* from the Church to Him. How much greater things should St. Nathanael see, through his glorious faith! Not now would the angels be ascending to a God in Heaven and then descending into an empty church, but they would be *descending* upon an altar whereon was the Son of *Man*, *Incarnate* Jehovah. As I, like St. Nathanael, look up to the altar I must by faith perceive the highest ranks of Heaven's hosts gathered about the Blessed Sacrament.

II. My own mother Church applies for me this great lesson, teaching me that the holy angels assemble about every true altar. For immediately before the consecration she directs her priests to make in the name of the people a special act of adoration there with those unseen hosts. "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty," he confesses first, "that we should at *all times* and in *all places*" make our acts of praise to God; but here "with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we *laud* and *magnify*" His glorious Name, "evermore praising" Him with the Tersanctus of the seraphim in Isaiah's vision.

III. Let me learn a lesson from the unselfish love of these dear "sons of God." They cannot make their communion, yet they continually visit Christ in the holy Mysteries to offer Him their adoration.

Friday after the First Sunday after Trinity

The Sacred Heart of Jesus. Read Hosea xi: 5-11

I. Jehovah, the covenant God of Israel, was the Eternal Word in the Blessed Trinity. And before His Incarnation He was infinitely tender toward His people. After the long course of Israel's infidelity, when idolatry and hideous vices merited the most fearful curses upon people and land, still He could not bear to visit his full wrath upon them. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah . . . [and] Zeboim?" (the ruined cities of the Dead Sea Valley). "Mine Heart is turned within Me, My compassions are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of Mine anger, ... for I am God, and not man." There was but one way in which Jehovah could bring His tenderness closer to us, and that was by taking a human heart in which He would experience every sorrow and every temptation which is possible to us. In the Sacred Heart of Jesus are combined the boundless charity of His Person and the unspeakable compassion of that Humanity in which He endured our very own woes.

II. This dear human Heart of Jehovah was opened on Good Friday that I might take refuge within It, and find shelter in every time of need. In that Heart I have a never-failing well of grace, and from within It I obtain a new and more loving outlook on life and my fellow-men. Then let me say to Jesus in the words of blessed John Keble:—

> O let my heart no further roam,
> 'Tis Thine by vows, and hopes and fears,
> Long since — O call Thy wanderer home;
> To that dear home, safe in Thy wounded Side,
> Where only broken hearts their sin and shame may hide.

III. St. Peter thinks of us as being carried in the Arms of Christ and ever receiving grace from the Sacred Heart, as infants nurse at their mother's breast. "As newborn babes," he urges us, "long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation; if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1 St. Peter ii: 2, R.V.)

Saturday after the First Sunday after Trinity

God's Way with a Soul. Read St. Mark ii: 15-20

I. St. John Baptist spent long years in the wilderness preparing to go before the Face of the Lord. We might have thought that Christ would have revealed His Deity to His servant during that time, especially as Nazareth was probably near St. John's abode in the desert. Yet the Baptist tells us that he did not know Christ until he saw the Holy Dove descend upon Him at His baptism (St. John i: 31, 33). God's way was to let him walk by faith and learn slowly, as little by little divine truth came to him through heart and conscience. I must not be surprised, then, if He leaves me to find the answer to spiritual difficulties through my meditations and Bible reading, or even through slowly ripening spiritual experience, instead of enlightening me at once by a private revelation.

II. My soul will develop a higher and truer spirituality if I walk by faith. It was through his obscure life of simple obedience to his Nazirite rule and his prayer and self-denial that St. John was brought to so great holiness as to be counted worthy to baptize the Incarnate God, and so to initiate His ministry in the world.

III. With how great delicacy and skill our Lord aids us in the crises of our faith! St. John seems to have passed through his bitterest struggle as he lay in the gloomy dungeon of Machærus. His followers, goaded by the Pharisees, came to him, demanding why they should fast and their master lie in prison, while Jesus feasted with publicans and sinners. Thus he was tormented by terrible questionings and perhaps tempted to abandon his faith in Christ. But he was not forgotten. Jesus knew all that His forerunner was suffering and sent him (St. Mark ii: 19 f.) a message of help, using that very figure of the *Bridegroom* which the holy Baptist had himself used in a memorable triumph of his faith (St. John iii: 29, 30). *Then* he had known that Jesus was from above, and freely and willingly had declared, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Was not Machærus but another opportunity for faith, and trust? So does my Lord whisper to me my past successes won by His grace to hearten me in my present strife.

The Second Sunday after Trinity

God's Banquet. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. The invitation to the divine feast, spread for every hungry soul, is a call to prefer the riches which God gives to absolutely all the world can offer. Otherwise the excuses for remaining away given by the invited guests, in our Lord's parable, would have been valid. The Jewish law, at the time of our Lord, allowed the buyer of land or of oxen one day for examination of his purchase, after which he must pay for it and could never afterwards rescind his bargain; and the invitation of the King was for that trial day.

The man who had just been married, also, was required by all the conventions of contemporary etiquette to spend especially his wedding day with his guests. Yet the king entirely rejected even these reasons for his guests' failure to participate in his supper. For God's people must regard His claim upon them as above that of man, and a share in His grace as worth more than all real and personal property.

II. How strange it is that we should ever be reluctant to come to God for the grace which He so freely puts before us! If we but once realize that we are as to our own natural goodness lame, maimed, blind beggars lying under the hedge-rows along the highways which lead to destruction, how gladly we shall respond to the divine call to exchange our disease and squalor for God's "grace abounding," and our rags for the "wedding garments" of greater supernatural righteousness which He gives us!

III. To concentrate our desire upon this banquet of God makes us heedless of this world's seductions. St. Chrysostom, when arraigned before the Arian emperor who sought to make him give up the Catholic Faith, displayed invincible courage because he cared only for the blessings which could not be taken from him. "I will banish you," the tyrant threatened. "You cannot," replied the Saint; "for the whole world is my Father's house." "I will take away your money and jewels." "You cannot, for my treasure is in Heaven and my heart is there." "I will drive you away from your friends and you shall be alone." "You cannot, for I have a Friend in Heaven from Whom you cannot part me." "I will kill you." "You cannot, for my life is hid with Christ in God."

Monday after the Second Sunday after Trinity

Christian Virginity. Read St. Luke i: 39-45

I. The Holy Spirit had prepared a welcome for our Lady when she entered St. Elizabeth's house. He caused the unborn Baptist to leap for joy in his mother's womb, as if to greet the Blessed Virgin, and filled St. Elizabeth with praise of the spotless Mother of Incarnate God. "Blessed art thou among women, ... and whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Such was the praise of the Blessed Virgin dictated by God the Holy Spirit. And she is the type of all those vowed to holy virginity, whose great privilege it is to give themselves to God in their unsullied maidenhood.

II. Our Lord during his ministry manifested a great love of virginity. His mother must be the virgin of virgins; one must be chosen for His forerunner who had been set apart in holy chastity from childhood. Nay, the very details of His earthly life display this same choice of agencies which had been kept for Him alone. Thus the colt upon which He made His royal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday was one upon which man had never ridden. And even the sepulchre which received His poor mangled Body at the end of Good Friday was one "wherein never man before was laid." I must ever be desirous of the growth and increase of the Religious Life.

III. The Blessed Virgin in her visitation shows admirably well the chastity of a holy Religious. Bishop Jeremy Taylor, explaining why she went "in haste," says that it was, "Lest she should be too long abroad under the dispersion and decomposing of her retirement; and therefore she hastens to an enclosure, to her cousin's house, as knowing that all virtuous women

like tortoises carry their house on their heads"; and that they bear "their chapel in their heart, and their danger in their eye, and their souls in their hands, and God in all their actions."

Tuesday after the Second Sunday after Trinity

The Religious Life Promotes the Kingdom of God among Men.

Read St. John i: 29-34

I. St. John Baptist was effective for Christ because his life was lived on heavenly and eternal principles in the wilderness. Thus his mind was divinely illuminated and his heart inflamed with love and zeal, that he might become the forerunner of Christ. The anticipatory "baptism of John" was taken up by Jesus Himself and filled with divine regenerating power. St. John's ringing cry, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," was adopted by Christ as part of the Gospel of the Kingdom (St. Mark i: 14, 15).

II. The holy Baptist's eyes were open to the descent of the Holy Dove upon our Lord, and he became effective as the herald of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, because he had learned *to live in spiritual relations with men and things.* And there are many examples through the Christian ages of the fact that those who become detached from earth and draw close to God in holy Religion become thereby the greatest seers and exponents of truth among men. It was a monk, St. Telemachus, who procured the final abrogation of the gladiatorial shows in Rome. The Benedictine Pope, St. Gregory, sent his fellow monk, St. Augustine, to establish the Church among the pagan Saxons. St. Francis of Assisi, through his tertiaries, broke the last of those effete bonds by which

feudalism had for centuries bound the people of the Middle Ages. And, in our day, it was a monk, Mendell, who, in the garden of his monastery, worked out the needed corrective of Darwin's theory of inheritance.

III. The Religious partakes in his measure of the angels' office, as our Lord has said: 'They which neither marry nor are given in marriage are equal unto the angels' (St. Luke xx: 35 f.). As those holy "sons of God," because they have first stood in the Presence of God can afterward minister perfectly to men, so the Religious having received of the divine wisdom in his convent, can become God's efficient collaborator in the world.

Wednesday after the Second Sunday after Trinity

The Religious Life Gives Greater Honor to Christ.

Read St. Matt. xix: 12-21

I. The Son of Man was Himself the perfect Religious. He was a Virgin. He "was subject unto" a man and woman through all His early years. He chose to live as a village carpenter for thirty years, and then for three years more as an itinerant preacher, poorer than the birds and foxes. Now, according to the saying, "Imitation is the sincerest praise," the Church honors her Lord through those of her members who at His call follow Him literally in holy poverty, chastity and obedience.

II. Special honor is done to our Lord by those who dedicate themselves to fulfil every *counsel* He has taught us, as well as to obey every *precept* He has laid down. Indeed it is only in the spirit of the counsels that the precepts can be completely obeyed. It is Religious who most literally carry out such in-

junctions as "Subject yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ" (Eph. v: 21, R.V.). "Seven times a day do I praise thee," the Church declares to her Lord as she recites her psalter; but she looks to the choirs of her Religious Houses to keep this promise, while her children in the world are busy with the necessary duties of the household and the market-place.

III. It is for the honor of Jesus, also, that some souls should devote themselves to Him absolutely. There is a distinction between the secular and the Religious Life, which is roughly represented by this analogy: "A man gives his love to his friend, but he gives himself to his wife." So, by becoming Christians, we give our love to God; by becoming Religious we give ourselves, body, mind, and will, to Him in holy espousals. I resolve, therefore, to promote the Religious Life in every way I can,—it may be by the gift of myself or my child; or, if not this, by my prayers and alms.

Thursday after the Second Sunday after Trinity

Making Christ Manifest. Read St. Matt. xiv: 2-12

I. The holy voice which cried from the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," had one only purpose. This was to make a straight path for Christ into men's hearts. The prophecy about him had been that he would "give knowledge of salvation unto his people *by* the remission of their sins" (St. Luke i: 77). And he said in reference to all his ministry (St. John i: 31): "That [Christ] should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." By bringing souls to Baptism, or to Penance, I, like the holy forerunner, shall be the means of enabling them to know Jesus.

II. By his personal sanctity, also, St. John attracted disciples whom he led to Christ. He was the morning star, "a burning and a shining light," in whose light even the Pharisees "were willing for a season to rejoice." Are men likely to be attracted to Christianity by my life because they behold the power of Jesus Christ illuminating it?

III. The martyrdom of this glorious saint is a splendid example of the witness which a Christian may bear to Christ. He had been King Herod's favorite court preacher, it seems, admired for his righteousness and holiness, protected by the royal favor, and commanding an attentive and apparently responsive hearing from the king (St. Mark vi: 20). As he looked into Herod's eager face, and observed that "he did many things" for the sake of his preacher, St. John may well have been tempted to condone the king's sinful relation to Herodias for the sake of the good he might be able to do his royal hearer and the kingdom. Yet he did not hesitate to denounce the unlawfulness of Herod's "marriage," though no doubt he knew that the remonstrance would cost him his life. Let me resolve that when I have opportunity to confess Christ before men, I shall not fail to bear my witness for the sake of human applause or seeming good to be gained by my silence.

Friday after the Second Sunday after Trinity

The Quickening of Our Faith. Read St. Matt. xvi: 16; xvii: 24-27

I. Within a short time after St. Peter had said to Christ, "Thou art the Son of God," he blundered into implicit unbelief of his own statement, in answering the tax-gatherers at Capernaum. For those men

asked him if Jesus would pay the didrachma which every careful Jew contributed to the support of the temple sacrifices. "Yes," or "Of course," he said impulsively. But our Lord anticipated his request for the tax. "Simon," He asked, "of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute? of their own children?" Being answered that they took it only from strangers, "Then," said He, "are the children free." Surely, He meant by this gentle correction, God, the King of Heaven and earth, will not require support for His House *from His own Son.* For the moment St. Peter had forgotten his great confession. How often is my action or my speech, like St. Peter's, inconsistent with my faith, because I have been caught off my guard, and my religion is not yet second nature to me? It is not such lively faith that it comes spontaneously to my mind.

II. Christ impressed His lesson upon His apostle by the one miracle in the Gospel which was wrought purely to increase faith. No doubt there were a few didrachmæ in the purse of the little band. But our Lord would obtain the tax in a way which was possible to none but God,—by miraculously placing a stater in the mouth of a fish and then enabling St. Peter to catch it. Marvel, my soul, at the mercy of a Saviour who was willing to exercise divine power in order to deepen the faith of a poor Galilean fisherman! And He has spared no pains to gain my absolute, practical faith in Him as God and in His every word as infallible.

III. In after years, St. Peter dwelt upon Jesus' manifestation of His divine power and love, until, gradually (Acts x: 9-48; Gal. ii: 11 ff.), his faith became so quickened that it took instant alarm at even the most sudden and covert assault of Satan. I also must use

my memory of God's gracious dealings with my soul for this same purpose of quickening my faith. How much of the material for my interior life depends upon memory! None of the future belongs to me, and only this moment of the present; but all my past, full of spiritual miracles, is stored up in my mind. Let me so consecrate memory that it will help my faith to become living and alert.

Saturday after the Second Sunday after Trinity

Memory Increasing Our Humility. Read St. Mark viii: 27-33

I. When St. Peter might have recalled his glorious confession and the praise with which our Lord had rewarded it, he chose rather to recollect the mortifying sequel of that triumph, his protest against the Cross, and the rebuke it received from Christ. For in the Gospel which probably is his, written through his amanuensis St. Mark, we have only the most abbreviated account of the confession and nothing at all of the blessing, commendation and magnificent "gift of the keys," which it gained for him from his Master. But he was careful to recollect and record, what the other evangelists omit, the humiliating publicity of the rebuke he received. 'And when Jesus had turned sharply and looked on his disciples,' St. Mark relates, 'He rebuked Peter.' When I am disposed to be elated over my successes, it will sober me to remember also my humiliating failures, lest I fall into pride.

II. The poverty of spirit to which memory will thus help me is an emptiness for Christ. 'There is,' says Solomon, 'that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor of all things, yet hath Great Riches' (Prov. xiii: 7).

III. It is a blessing, therefore, when I meet, casually perhaps, a reminder of my past failures. The tradition is that St. Peter, after he denied Jesus, never afterward heard the cock crow that he did not once more go apart and weep over his disloyalty. But in this way he became a great saint. No doubt God often gives me some like stimulus to humble penitence, that, having made me receptive, he may bestow upon me the grace to make me one of his saints. (St. James iv: 6.)

The Third Sunday after Trinity

Remembering Christ's Submissiveness.

Read the Epistle for the Day.

I. When St. Peter urged Christians to "be subject one to another," he bethought himself how difficult it would be for the younger, undisciplined souls to submit themselves to their seniors in the Church. He therefore invoked the strongest possible sanction for the obligation of submission he was teaching, while yet at the same time he required it in the highest degree. "Be clothed with humility," or, literally, "Be aproned with lowliness," he demanded of us. He seems to have had before his mind the Upper Room in Jerusalem the night before our Lord's death on the cross. Once more in thought he was in that lighted chamber and saw Jesus rise from the table, lay aside His garments and gird Himself with a towel, standing forth in the familiar garb of a domestic slave. Thus "aproned" He proceeded to wash the feet of each apostle. St. Peter protested "Thou shalt never wash my feet." He must have recalled with a sudden sense of shame how they had

all passed the water pots by, each tacitly declining the menial office of bathing the others' feet, in eagerness to gain the seat at Christ's Right Hand. But our Lord would not be deterred from His slave's task until He had finished it and had pointed out the lesson: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." St. Peter, therefore, reminds us how God Incarnate put on the apron which was the badge of slaves and knelt before His creatures in one of the lowliest of servile offices. "How then," he seems to ask, "can we refuse to obey any direction of any superior our Lord may set over us."

II. And he considers that we owe this humble submission, not only to "spiritual pastors and masters," but to every human authority as well. "Submit yourselves," he urges, "to every ordinance of man," or, the true text may be, "to every human creature," "for the Lord's sake."

III. In my relation as a member of a family, as a citizen, and as a child of the Church, I will be disposed always to humble submission. For I shall remember that I follow a God Who "in the days of His Flesh" was always a Subject,—to His mother and foster-father, to the Jewish Church in all its sphere of Old Testament authority, and finally to Pilate and the soldiers who nailed Him to a felon's cross.

Monday after the Third Sunday after Trinity

Remembering God's Part in Our Spiritual Life.

Read St. Mark viii: 14-21

I. St. Peter records in our passage for reading how Christ taught His Church a lesson in cultivating an effectual memory of the supernatural element in

our spiritual life. After the tremendous miracles of the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand, the apostles still were so dull to the divine power to provide food which had been shown therein that they were greatly concerned over their failure to bring with them bread enough for their journey. When, therefore, Christ would have warned them against the spiritual leaven of the Pharisees, they feared that He was reproving them because they had not brought enough provisions. Our Lord was grieved because they could not perceive, neither understand, God's part in the supply of their wants. Had they done so, they might have been receptive of the further spiritual lesson He sought to inculcate. They remembered indeed how many baskets of fragments *they* had taken up each time; when Jesus asked them, they answered promptly, "Twelve," and "Seven." But their memory of the divine providence which Jesus had displayed was not that vivid, immediate, effectual sort which would have made it a practical factor in their every-day thinking. Am I also more alive to my own doings in the natural sphere than to the unseen, but all-powerful, activity of God in my spiritual course?

II. The four evangelists may teach us how receptive of divine truth a mind is when it loses the sense of its own importance in its attention to God. Each one of the Gospels, Godet remarks, is like a great painting with the artist's name indicated in some dim corner. Thus St. Matthew ever writes himself as Matthew "the publican"; St. Mark is thought to have been the young man of whom it is said in the Second Gospel that he deserted Christ and fled away naked; St. Luke is supposed to have been the companion of Cleopas, whom our Lord chided as a "fool and slow of heart to believe" the Scriptures teaching His

resurrection (St. Luke xxiv: 25); and St. John always described himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," never as "the disciple who loved Jesus." The more I can perceive God's part in my spiritual life, the more I shall be illuminated by Him.

III. God can achieve great results through the loaves and fishes of my composite personality, if only by the help of memory my soul learns to wait upon Him. And one act full of the divine power to which I thus open my soul is worth more than a lifetime of merely human benevolence.

"A man lived fifty years—joy dashed with tears,
Loved, toiled; had wife and child, and lost them; died,
And left of all his long life's work one little song.
That lasted—naught beside.

"Like the monk Felix's bird, that song was heard;
Doubt prayed, faith soared, death smiled itself to sleep.
That song saved souls. You say the man paid stifly? Nay.
God paid—and thought it cheap."

Tuesday after the Third Sunday after Trinity

Treasuring Memories of God's Mercies. Read St. Mark viii: 22-26

I. Our Saviour's treatment of the blind man in our passage is an instruction of the most vivid and practical sort, in the necessity of recollecting God's benefits. For he was cured outside the town, and as soon as his sight was restored Christ "sent him away to his home," saying, "Do not even enter into the village" (St. Mark viii: 26, R.V.). This was to insure his having the opportunity of himself spiritually assimilating the loving gift of God before he went to chatter about it with his fellow townsmen.

II. After I have received any great spiritual boon, like an answer to prayer, or my communion, let me

be quiet a while until I have with thankfulness and devotion realized what has just been done for me. The spiritual value of divine mercies bestowed upon my soul is frittered away in great part if I at once begin discussing them with others. I must maintain for a while a holy reserve with every other person but One.

III. The good which Christ works in my soul by a gift of His grace needs to be brought out into the clear light of my immediate consciousness by reverent reflection upon it. A humble analogy of this truth is found in what is known as invisible ink, which leaves no visible mark when we first write with it; only the further treatment of the manuscript with heat brings out the characters clearly. Jesus means by each of His gifts to trace in my heart some new, or plainer, lineament of His likeness; but the new character will appear in my practical life only as it is brought out by my devout reflection on the blessing I have received.

Wednesday after the Third Sunday after Trinity

Remembering Jesus' Triumph over Death.

Read 1 St. Peter v: 1-4; 2 St. Peter i: 13-15

I. Had there been no memory in St. Peter's mind except that of his denial, he would no doubt have been humbled, but also he would have become weak and ineffective. The first message of the Easter angels, "Go and tell [Christ's] disciples *and Peter* that He goeth before you" (St. Mark xvi: 7), is significant of our Lord's anxiety for His apostle mourning apart from the other ten in the loneliness of his self-reproach. "He was mentioned by name, lest he should despair because of his denial," says Venerable Bede. Behind

my dismal experience with myself stands the radiant Figure of Him Who reconciled me to God by His death and is saving me by His life. (Rom. v: 10.)

II. It was the certainty that his Lord, once crucified, was now "going before" him in Easter power and glory which inspired St. Peter's saintly life and martyr's death. His memory witnessed to the Passion from Gethsemane through all the scenes of suffering love, perhaps even to the very last cry on the cross. But also it recorded that day when he had sat alone, weeping in the agony of self-reproach, and suddenly his Risen Lord had appeared to him in glory. "I am a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the vision of His glory," he says, as we may paraphrase his vivid antithesis. From depths of trouble or temptation, when my Lord perhaps seems dead and all my hopes buried with Him, let me, like St. Peter, remember that, out of failure, abjection and "the cruelest and most shameful of deaths," Jesus has brought once for all the most splendid triumph for Himself and all His members.

III. Deep in St. Peter's mind was another memory of Christ which inspired him with a holy eagerness for martyrdom. On the Mount of Transfiguration he had heard Jesus talking with His saints "of the decease," or "exodus," "which He would accomplish at Jerusalem." He would seem to die like a felon, but really He would be issuing from the Red Sea of His Blood the Conqueror of all His enemies (St. Luke ix: 31). From that divine "thanatopsis" our Saint learned to think of his own passion as his issue out of Egypt unto the promised Land. Thus he, imitating his Lord, speaks of his cross as "my exodus" (2 St. Peter i: 15, literally translated). And he accomplished it, joyfully, with head down, "in the very best position

for his journey to Heaven," as St. Chrysostom remarks. May my crucified Master and His saints teach me, also, to accomplish my joyful exodus into life eternal!

Thursday after the Third Sunday after Trinity

St. Peter's Repentance. Read the Gospel for the Week.

I. In our English Bible the same word is used for the repentance of St. Peter and that of Judas, but in the Greek original there is the greatest difference between the expressions employed. Judas became "remorseful" (St. Matt. xxvii: 3), which means that he saw the bitter suffering his conscience would inflict on him because he had violated it in betraying Jesus. He was not sorry for his Lord, but for himself. St. Peter, on the other hand, grieved because of the hurt he had done to the Heart of Jesus and its tender love for him. And the repentance which characterized his whole after life is described by a Greek word which means "change of mind," or "heart." From this contrast between the saint and the lost soul it appears, therefore, that true penitence will make me grieve over the wound I have dealt the Sacred Heart of my Saviour, and also 'change my heart,' that I may offend Him no more.

II. What gave the crowning poignancy to St. Peter's repentance was that he had denied his Master at that very time when Christ was praying for him that he might be converted. There before the High Priest, in utter forgetfulness of Himself, Christ was pleading that Peter's faith should not fail, and that he should not become the wheat of Satan's sieve (St. Luke xxii: 31); while below in the courtyard, under His very Eyes, the apostle was denying Him.

Then "Jesus turned and looked upon Peter," and in that look what disappointment, what grief, what gentle reproach! Yet, when I sin, are not 'my tongue and my doings against the Lord, to rebel against *the Eyes* of His glory'? (Isa. iii : 8).

III. But there is another look sometimes seen on our Lord's Face by the angels in Heaven. This is joy over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine blessed saints which now need no repentance. Let me this very moment bring that look of supreme happiness to the Face of my Saviour by an act of deep contrition.

Friday after the Third Sunday after Trinity

The Folly of Sin. Read Psalm iv.

I. The earnest warning St. Peter sends us through the epistle for this week is drawn from his life-long experience with his own folly and that of other men. "Be sober, be vigilant," he urges us, "because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, steadfast in the Faith." For why should he need to exhort us to resist a wild beast thirsting for our blood, except that we poor sinners are so foolish that we even invite our adversary to enter the door of our senses? And everywhere in the Scriptures a "fool" is not one who is mentally deficient, but one who allows himself to be deceived and seduced by Satan; one who 'feedeth on ashes, whose deceived heart hath turned him aside, so that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?' (Isa. xliv : 20).

II. The folly of sin lies in its being a love of vanity (which means nothingness), and of a lie. Therefore

in the office of Compline, the last office of the day, the Church has been guided to set at the beginning St. Peter's warning, and, in the fore-front of the psalter, the Fourth Psalm. Thus her children take on their lips the words of David as he pleads, "O ye sons of men how long . . . . . will ye love vanity and seek after falsehood?" Let me answer this inspired question with the resolve no longer to permit the adversary to rob my soul of God's gifts of grace, by specious bribes, which are really nought but nothingness and a lie.

III. In this same verse the Royal Psalmist asks us also, "How long will ye turn . . . . . glory into shame?" Now our glory is found in the likeness to God impressed upon the soul in its creation,—when God said, "Let Us make man in Our image," or, literally, "shadow," "after Our likeness." And I turn this "my glory into shame" when I forget my divine origin and behave like a friend of Satan. St. John of Kenty used to say to himself in moments of temptation, "Above!"—that is, that he must be above the folly of wickedness. Let me take his word as my motto for this day.

Saturday after the Third Sunday after Trinity

Christian Temper. Read Eph. iv: 23-27

I. In our passage for reading, St. Paul had in mind Psalm iv: 4. For when he counsels us "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath," he is giving, in the first part of this verse, what is probably the correct translation of David's words. (Comp. R. V. marg.) The Royal Psalmist had been fleeing all day from his rebellious son and even at night he was not allowed to rest, but

must direct his men in their passage of the Jordan. His officers, gathered round their beloved king, were pouring vituperation upon Absalom and his adherents. But David, while he was righteously indignant with the rebels against himself as the theocratic king and God's vicegerent, yet reproved his nobles for their anger over his personal injuries. And St. Paul quotes for us the inspired counsel of the Psalmist, adding that we are to put away even righteous wrath by sunset, because by continuing into the night, it would be very liable to become natural resentment and malice.

II. There is, therefore, such a thing as Christian "temper," in the sense that our soul is to have the temper of steel in its attitude towards evil, because it is done against God. But from this, its essential quality, it must never degenerate into anger against people, which would offend God the more. It is in fact the temper of God, Who hates sin and loves the sinner. St. Ignatius, the martyr, writing to St. Polycarp, exhorted him to "Stand firm as an anvil when it is struck." This is Christian temper towards individuals who injure us: it is the patience of the saints, the long-suffering of God.

III. The last hour at night, when the events of the day come before us, may be a time when we are in special danger of uncharitableness. Let us in the evening often think of these things: (1) Our Lord's temper of gentle compassion toward *us*; (2) the certainty that we would be as guilty as our enemy, or more guilty, except for divine grace. Let us 'give no place to the devil.' Let there be in our hearts no room for him, made by admitting a thought of vindictiveness or a wish for retaliation.

The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Likeness to God in Charity. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. We notice at once in reading our Lord's words appointed for the Gospel to-day how clearly and emphatically He urges us to be like God. When he had reminded us that we are "the children of the Highest," Who "is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil," He continued, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." And presently He gives the Church that fundamental principle for the guidance of her whole life,—"Everyone that is perfect shall be as his Master." Let us then, being children and pupils of God, imitate His "courtesy," as St. Francis of Assisi used quaintly to call it, which leads Him to 'make His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and send His rain on the just and unjust?'

II. Of our greatest human virtues,—faith, hope, and love,—God has only love. He *is* love. And it is wonderful how divine charity has ever occupied itself with the lowliest services to creatures. David could say to the Father, "Thou shalt light my candle: the Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light"; for our Heavenly Father bends down from Heaven to cheer His poor human children. The Incarnate Son said, "I am among you as he that serveth," where His words suggest the slave who used to wait at table. And Christ spoke of the Holy Ghost as being the "Porter" of the sheepfold which is the Catholic Church (St. John x: 3). To do the most menial offices of charity, therefore, is to be like the Blessed Trinity.

III. Since God is love, He is also light (St. John ix: 5). And the Apostle of Love tells us that this is true of us also: "He that loveth his brother," he

declares, "abideth in the light and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." If I love as God loves I shall neither myself stumble in my Christian pilgrimage, nor shall I put an obstacle in my brother's way.

Monday after the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Perfection Through Charity. Read Exodus xi : 4-7 ; Psalm iv : 3

I. When David says, 'Know that the Lord has *wonderfully set apart* for himself the saint,' he uses the same Hebrew word which Moses employs (Ex. xi : 7) in declaring to Pharaoh, 'The Lord doth *set apart* Israel from the Egyptians.' Now God's ancient people were set apart by the blood of the passover lamb which they sprinkled on the side-posts and the upper lintel of the door, thus making the form of the Cross. In the same way, each one of us at Baptism was 'marvelously set apart for God as a saint,' by the sprinkling on our souls of the Blood of the Lamb of God

II. The development of this our initial sanctity must be through the growth of charity within us. Bare intellectual *faith* cannot expand our souls to the magnanimous proportions of saintliness. There were those in the "Ages of Faith" who believed every dogma of their religion with absolute submission, yet who were destitute of Christian love; so that they would have an enemy led into mortal sin in order to kill him before he could repent, that he might be lost eternally. *Knowledge* alone will only result in the growth of pride. "Knowledge puffeth up," says St. Paul, "but charity edifieth," or "buildeth up." Let us then love God and our neighbor with our every thought.

III. Our Lord makes us a great promise in the Gospel of this week. "Give and it shall be given unto you," He assures us; "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall they give unto your bosom" (R.V.). Probably those who shall pour into our heart this rich reward for charity are the holy angels. Let us then engage in this most profitable barter of loving deeds for divine grace, until we attain even to heroic holiness like that of the saints.

Tuesday after the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Charity above All. Read Col. iii: 12-16

I. St. Paul ends his description of the virtues which should clothe the Christian soul with this direction to us: "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." He was thinking, it seems, of the upper garment which, in the contemporary Eastern costume, held in place the loose underclothing. In that same way love is "the bond of perfectness," since it keeps in its fitting place each of the other qualities of the soul.

II. Now charity will not even *think* evil (1 Cor. 13: 5,), and it is therefore as far as possible from speaking without necessity critically, even though truthfully, of any other soul. Let me remember that my tongue must be kindled by one or other of two fires. For St. James declares that detractors' tongues are "set on fire of hell" (iii: 6), and St. Paul shows that he expects our Christian tongues to be set on fire by the Blessed Spirit, Who is love. We are to 'speak by the Holy Ghost,' he says, as if he were mentioning something commonly assumed of all the faithful. Let me resolve, therefore, to pause a mo-

ment before referring to others in my conversation, that what I am about to say may be purified by the Divine Fire of Love burning in my heart.

III. St. Paul was almost scrupulously afraid of doing anything which would "hinder the Gospel of Christ." The picturesque Greek words he uses in 1 Cor. ix: 12 mean literally: We "suffer all things lest we should dig a trench in the way of the Gospel of Christ": a word of detraction, gossip, or, worst of all, slander, is an obstacle put in the path of the blessed Gospel hindering its progress into the souls of all the people affected by my utterance. Let me abhor uncharitable speech. I resolve to think of it as if it would dig a trench in the path of my Saviour, as He advances under His Cross to save the souls which I was about to offend.

Wednesday after the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Almsgiving. Read St. Matt. v: 43; vi: 4

I. Our Lord confirmed in Person His covenant through His prophet that God will pour out upon those who give alms a superabundant blessing (Mal. iii: 10). And this promise is fulfiled to me in the following ways among many others: (a) By my offerings I lay up for myself treasures in Heaven and learn to set my heart upon them. Covetousness for these riches directly counteracts the "lust of the eyes" for perishing temporal things. (b) Generosity toward Christ's Church and His poor brethren will bring me to such spiritual poverty, that the "prince of this world" when he cometh will have nothing in me. "He that hath empty pockets," says the old proverb, "shall sing in the presence of the robber." (c) When

I give my alms for the glory of God and the good of souls, I receive always a precious increase of grace in my own soul.

II. But it is not only to myself that my almsgiving is profitable. I can buy other souls for Jesus Christ. I can go into the highways and hedges, through the parish clergy or missionaries, and as many as I find "bid to the wedding" of their souls with God. St. Francis of Assisi used to urge his monks to "travel far and wide." I can do this in the persons of Christ's appointed agents by giving alms to wing their flight with the "glad tidings" over land and sea.

III. Let it be my special care to make gifts in support of those who rescue the most neglected and despised sinners. This is a holy and glorious way of ministering to Him Who was despised and rejected of men, aye, a very Scorn of men and an Outcast.

Thursday after the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Jealousy for the Honor of God. Read Heb. x: 26-31

I. Nowhere in the Scriptures does the blasphemy cast upon God's honor by sin appear in such fearful plainness as in our passage. The wicked, we are told, "tread under foot the Son of God," the word for "tread" being one which was customarily used for trampling by the foot of beasts. And from the fact that our Lord uses this same Greek term figuratively in St. Matthew vii: 6, it seems that St. Paul means to interpret His saying about Himself. Taking, therefore, the Gospel verses and the words of the Apostle in conjunction, Jesus Christ has declared Himself to be the Holy Thing and the Pearl, which the ungodly "trample under their feet." How eager I must be, therefore, for the conversion of these evil men, not for

their own salvation only but even more, that there may be fewer to dishonor God.

II. Sinners, continues the Apostle, by their evil deeds 'count the Blood of the covenant wherewith they have been sanctified' a 'common,' or 'profane,' or even 'polluted,' 'thing,' according to the different meanings of the Greek word here used. This is a reference to post-baptismal sin, and means that the mortal sin of a Christian breaks the vows he made to God when at the font he was sanctified by the Blood of the covenant being poured over his soul. The other side of this terrible havoc wrought by the deadly transgression of the baptized appears when St. Paul declares that "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." (Heb. vi : 6.) Once again the iniquity of the Christian soul, 'does despite,' or 'offers an outrage,' 'unto the Spirit Who came offering it His grace!' Surely there is no reality in my Christian profession if I am not by these revelations fired to a consuming jealousy for my Lord.

III. While there is no second Good Friday for such sinners (Heb. x : 26), and no second "renewal" *by baptism* (Heb. vi : 6), the love of God but waits its opportunity to cleanse them by sacramental absolution. Shall not I, by my prayers and alms, strive to bring souls to Jesus' pardoning mercy, that from being blasphemers of Him they may become His loving disciples?

Friday after the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Christ Preparing Us to Save Souls. Read St. Mark iii : 11-15

I. Let us first consider the way in which Christ calls His disciples, and endues them with power to be

His ministers. "He ordained," or "*made*," "twelve." The Greek word used is the equivalent of that Hebrew one which in the Old Testament signified making a priest. The true ministers of Jesus are, therefore, in the fullest sense endowed and enabled by Him. But not only are the clergy made to share in the powers of the great High Priest; in a different way, yet truly, the entire body of the faithful is admitted into His priesthood. 'Thou madest us unto our God kings and priests'; thus the Church truly praises the Lamb of God (Rev. v: 10). And therefore lay people, too, must first "be with Him" in the spiritual life 'that afterward He may send them forth to preach' Him by their lives.

II. The response of the disciples to Jesus' call is briefly but significantly described by St. Mark, when he says, 'They came *away* unto Him.' We might paraphrase his words, 'They came *loose*, and responded to their vocation.' For the evangelist's thought is that all whom the Lord chose to call unto Him parted finally with everything, broke every attachment, in order to give themselves up absolutely to the service of their homeless Master. Am I in any way trying to serve both God and mammon?

III. From the call of the first disciples I may learn the need of coming close to Christ before I try to help other souls. For the demons 'threw themselves at his feet' and preached Him exactly as He wanted the people to accept Him. "Thou art the Son of God," they cried. Yet "He straitly charged them that they should not make Him known." He would accept neither these preachers with unclean lips, nor the time to proclaim Him, which they had chosen of their own self-will. And even though I bear to others the message of the Catholic Faith, yet

my time of heralding it will be inopportune and my words, however orthodox, will not be acceptable to my Master, unless I have received my direction and my consecration from Him.

Saturday after the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Charity for Our Own Household. Read Isa. xi: 1-9

I. The saints have interpreted our passage to be a parable teaching us how people of different temperaments are to live together in Christian charity. As the Branch from Jesse's roots, upon Whom the Spirit of the Lord rested without measure, would as a little child lead the wolf with the lamb, the leopard with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, in peace, so does Jesus "make men to be of one mind in an house," widely different in disposition though they may be. (Ps. lxviii: 6.) For we only need behold one another in Jesus' Heart to have perfect charity even for those whose peculiarities or imperfections irritate us in our daily home life.

II. Those same holy writers from whom we have already quoted give us the following trenchant warning: A detractor makes a breach in the ramparts of the most God-fearing family; a slanderer undermines the whole edifice; while he who spreads discord pulls it down to the very foundations. Could we but remember, while we are exercising the dangerous prerogative of speech, that 'we speak in Christ, in the sight of God,' how often we would edify those whom now we frequently offend!

III. The defects of our immediate friends, for the very reason that they come so close to us, are opportunities to obey generously the second of our Lord's

two great commandments. Thus St. Paul directs us to bear "one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. vi: 2). The "burdens" he has in mind are those difficulties of disposition which our brethren have to carry, with how much suffering we know not. Would it not be following the leadership of the little "Child" if I also would take my brethren's infirmities and bear their spiritual sicknesses? (St. Matt. viii: 17.)

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Jesus' Calls to Come Nearer Him. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. We can distinguish several successive calls of those apostles who were fishermen. (St. John i: 40-42; St. Matt. iv: 18.) Once before Jesus had summoned Simon Peter, and Andrew, when they were in the act of casting a net into the sea. And they had responded. But then they had "left their nets"; now they "left all." Their discipleship after that vocation had been for a brief time, now it was for life. And for me, too, there will be repeated vocations, each one calling me into closer and more permanent discipleship to my Saviour.

II. St. Peter had witnessed many miracles of Christ before this one of the draught of fishes. There had been the changing of the water into wine at Cana, the healing of the nobleman's son (St. John iv: 46-54), and the cure of his mother-in-law, but these proofs of Christ's power and love had not touched his heart as did this one wrought in his own craft. They had gradually prepared the way for his first great act of contrition; but this brought him actually to his knees before his Lord. In the same way the power of Christianity in my own practical experience is a force

of almost unparalleled potency to work my conversion. Thus if in my social and business life I were to venture to apply my religion at all points, I should perceive the justification of Christ's claim to be the wisdom and power of God as I never realized it before. This would be to me truly what the calendar declares it, "the year of our Lord."

III. As St. Peter's commission was given after a miraculous draught of fishes, so it was restored after just such another draught (St. John xxi: 1-19). But observe the Apostle's great gain meanwhile, in spiritual wisdom. This first time he would have driven Christ away, although with happy inconsistency he remained kneeling before Him. But at his restoration, even though he had denied his Master thrice, he flung himself into the water and swam to Him with impetuous speed. So let it be with me whenever I am disloyal to my Lord, especially if it should be by mortal sin. I must immediately run to Him for His ready gifts of pardon and strength that like St. Peter I may become more faithful than ever before.

Monday after the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

My Soul must be Deep and Pure. Read 1 Thess. v: 4-9

I. As our Lord desired to fish "in the deep" of the lake, so does He love to capture the minds and wills of deep souls. He would "catch men." And one of the fishers in that Gospel episode is a good example of the way a soul may be deepened by Jesus. For, from following Him out of wonder at His miracle, St. James came at last to yield up to Him his whole will in martyrdom. We read that he was "*astonished* at the draught of fishes which they had taken," and

this admiration for our Lord's power evidently led him to forsake all and follow Jesus. But how many deepening lessons must have intervened between this and his holocaust of himself when he bowed beneath the executioner's sword! And if we were drawn to the Catholic Faith at first by the intellectual satisfaction it afforded, or through emotion aroused by its beautiful services, or because the ritual appealed to the romantic or æsthetic in our temperament, let us never be disheartened on this account. Christ will deepen this superficial attachment into whole-hearted discipleship.

II. A devout soul has a translucent quality to the gaze of the Divine "Fisher of Men." He, indeed, through St. Paul, declares that He expects every one of us to be full of light. "God hath shined [as being Himself] in our hearts," the Apostle taught the Corinthians (2, iv: 6). "Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day," he says elsewhere (1 Thess. v: 5). And then, as if to state in one sentence Jesus' aspiration for us, he declares: "Now are ye light in the Lord." Therefore there must be in my soul no hidden recesses which I shrink from disclosing to the Eyes of my all-holy Lord.

III. Dr. Pusey affords us a fine example of a deep and pure soul, in which Christ has "caught" mind and heart. When, for example, he had secretly supplied the funds to build a magnificent church at Leeds, out of a purse already greatly diminished by his generous alms-deeds, he caused to be inscribed on the building, instead of his own name as donor, the words: "Of your charity pray for the soul of a penitent." Let me try to do at least one work to-day with as pure an intention for God's glory and as deep a love for Him and for my fellow-men as those which characterized this holy soul.

Tuesday after the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Fear and Love of God. Read Ps. lxxxvi.

I. St. Peter, addressing Christians who had already suffered severely and who were threatened with further persecutions, urges them, "Be not afraid of their terror, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." He meant to inspire them with filial fear, full of love, toward their God as dwelling within them. For he knew that thus they would be preserved from quailing before God's enemies. St. Augustine compares holy fear, or piety, to a needle, and love to the thread, saying that the needle must pierce us first in order to draw the thread after it. If we may expand the figure, we may say truly that again and again there must come the sharp prick of the needle in order that by stitch after stitch with the thread of divine charity, God may unite our hearts to His own (Ps. lxxxvi: 11).

II. Let our memory be guarded and directed by fear and love. We must beware of opening afresh the sins of our past life, lest spiritual infection should rise from them, as a deadly miasma rises from graves in which have been buried the victims of the plague. For the sake of our repentance we should remember our past failures, but without dwelling upon those which, like anger, would poison us afresh. And, in general, we must rather hark back to the triumphs over sin which God has achieved in and through us. Like David, let us remember how He has delivered us out of the paw of the lion and the bear, that we may be assured of His saving us from the hand of this Philistine confronting us. Then "in the name of the Lord God of hosts," with the strength of our filial love, we shall strike down our enemy.

III. Blessed Edward Pusey, as he lay dying,

seemed to see our Lord plainly. At once he cried out, "Thou Lord God of hosts," being filled with holy fear. But immediately afterwards he exclaimed with deep devotion, "*My* Lord and *my* God." This was the love which is the inseparable complement of Christian reverence for our Heavenly Father.

Wednesday after the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Conditions of Following Christ. Read St. Mark viii: 34-38

I. The crowd of people who had gathered about our Lord were rushing too lightly into discipleship. He therefore declared to them plainly what were the severe conditions upon which they could follow Him. Evidently His words made the deepest impression upon the apostles, for St. Matthew and St. Luke report them almost word for word as St. Mark does. Let us then examine these terms of enlistment into the army of God, for they are the terms laid down for us also. "Whosoever will come after Me," said Jesus, "let him deny himself." Now the meaning of this precept is not as if He had said "Let my disciple deny himself as to some particular *thing*," but rather "Let him repudiate all self-centered claims; let him deny his very *self*."

II. "Let him take up his cross," our Lord continues. This was more startling still, for it suggested to His Jewish audience a terrible scene, only too familiar to them. After one of the many contemporary insurrections there would issue from the judgment hall of the Roman governor a long line of convicted rebels, headed by their ringleaders, and every one loaded with the cross on which he was to be crucified. Jesus leads those who bear the cross

after him, those who, like Himself, have denied and repudiated the power of this world. Shall I refuse to take up my cross *daily* and go after Him?

III. "And let him follow Me." The vivid present tense of this word "follow" indicates that discipleship must assert itself habitually and as a permanent state of spiritual activity. Constantly on our earthly pilgrimage we stand at the crossroads of a choice, for Christ or for self. Let me never think any such decision unimportant, for the wrong turn would start me on the road to destruction. Let me daily follow the Divine Cross-Bearer.

Thursday after the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Enterprise for Christ. Read St. Mark x: 26-31

I. My first requisite if I am to launch a venture for Christ, is a blind obedience to His direction given me through my conscience or by His Church. It must have seemed a fruitless attempt which our Lord asked of St. Peter and his partners. All night they had dragged their nets through the water without success. And now the best time for their fishing, the cool hours of darkness, had passed and it was broad day, when the fish had all fled from the heated surface to the bottom of the lake. The nets, also, were on shore being washed. The fishermen had been sitting during the Lord's discourse, and were stiffened in body, disheartened in spirit, and drooping in will. Yet immediately they obeyed their Master's behest. No matter how contrary to human prudence a direction may seem, let my answer always be, "Nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net."

II. What human venture can promise us a

millionth part of the success which is assured in any enterprise for Christ? St. Peter and his companions left only a few fishing nets and a boat or two, but they gained a hundredfold in the spiritual wealth of the Kingdom,—kinship with the blessed Saints, in this present world, and, in the world to come, life everlasting.

III. What, then, are the drawbacks which hinder me from making this venture wholeheartedly? They are shyness, fear of what people may say, dislike of strictness, and the fear of after a while growing weary of my enterprise, or of being too weak for the high calling. But remember what God said to Moses when he was deterred by such drawbacks: "I have made thee *a god* to Pharaoh." (Ex. vii: 1.) He can make me also strong enough and wise enough to succeed in my venture for His glory.

Friday after the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Laying up Treasures in Heaven. Read Neh. iv: 14-18

I. To refrain our mouth from evil and guile, to eschew evil and do good, to seek peace and pursue it; these are the ways, St. Peter assures us, to lay up with God "blessing" and "good days" and "life." The Christians to whom he wrote these promises were consoled by them for the loss of all else, so that they willingly endured forfeiture of property, scourging, and even death in fearful forms. And although I have not their opportunity of amassing great fortunes in God's treasurehouse, yet I have those small persecutions to endure by which I may accumulate a great store of merit. As the threatenings of Sanballat and his followers only hastened the work of Nehemiah

in the building of the wall of Jerusalem, so those who "nag" us are really our friends, for, without them, how should we have occasion to refrain our tongue, eschew evil and seek peace? Are they not our benefactors, bringing us a larger measure of God's blessing and spiritual life?

II. How many different people, each with his peculiar disposition, degree of receptivity, and needs, come to me in the course of any one day to receive my sympathy, courtesy and brotherly love? Let me be perfectly reckless and thoughtless of my own spiritual gain, while I scatter blessings upon these various hearts. 'Blessed are they that sow upon all waters!' cries the Royal Prophet. For, incredible as it may seem, the harvest from such husbandry is assured to us on the very word of God (St. Matt. v: 7, 9, 43-48).

III. God's greatest servants are our teachers in this spiritual business. One of them, David Livingstone, said, "I will place no value in anything I have or may possess except in its relation to the Kingdom of Christ." He died on his knees in his African hut, praying, we doubt not, for the conversion of the black race, for which he had labored almost single-handed during thirty years. Let me also lose my life now for Christ's sake and the Gospel's that I may save it for eternity (St. Mark viii: 35).

Saturday after the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Spiritual Husbandry. Read Rom. xiv: 16-20

I. St. Paul has given us in one of his wonderful summaries the three things in which the Kingdom of God consists, that is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." If in these we serve Christ

we are acceptable to God and edifying to men. Let us then *do* righteousness (St. Matt. vi: 1, A.V. marg.). This is to be the labor of our spiritual husbandry. Let us break up the fallow ground of our souls, and the Lord will come and rain righteousness upon us (Hosea x: 12). Our part in this interior farming is that, by the Holy Ghost impelling us to *will*, and helping us to *do*, we should plow up the hard ground of selfishness by daily acts of self-denial in the service of Jesus and of others' souls. Thereupon God eagerly takes advantage of our new receptivity to make us more righteous by pouring His grace upon our fallow spiritual soil.

II. The great work of incarnate God when He ministered to men on earth was to bring spiritual peace. Let us then *make* peace. For He grants us a share in this His life-work, in words which have seemed to many copyists incredibly gracious. "*We* must work the works of Him that sent Me," he said, as He was becoming the Light of the World to a certain blind man, and at the same time bringing the peace of faith to his soul (St. John ix: 4, 35-38, R.V.). And it is not only the "mountains" which shall "bring peace to the people," but also "the little hills, by righteousness" (Ps. lxxii: 3). Even I, by the little hills of my spiritual furrows, tiny as they are beside the massive virtue of the saints, may bring forth a crop of righteousness and peace.

III. We are to *have* joy in the Holy Ghost, as the sunlight of our husbandry. In that warmth every grief is a seed of blessing; in that glorious light there is a rainbow over every rain of tears.

"The dark-brown mold's upturned
By the sharp pointed plow,
And I've a lesson learned.

My life is but a field
  Spread out beneath God's sky,
Some harvest rich to yield.

Where grows the golden grain,
  Where faith, where sympathy?
In a furrow cut by pain."

The Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Humility about Our Spiritual Welfare. Read St. Luke xviii: 9-14

I. Of all the parties in the Jewish commonwealth it was the Pharisees against whom our Lord leveled His most severe rebukes. The Herodians were thoroughly unscrupulous politicians, and were vicious also for the most part. The Sadducees were blatant unbelievers. Yet our Lord was always gentle, it seems, in His correction of both these groups. But He lashed the Pharisees with fearful invective, as one might lash a victim of morphine to wake him from his deadly sleep. (cp. St. Matt. xxiii.) For there was this fatal vice in their spiritual life: they "trusted in themselves, that they were righteous." And this is the subtle disease of spiritual pride which is likely to attack religious people in all ages. The correction lies in cultivating a habit of mind by which we think of ourselves as we appear to God rather than as we appear to ourselves and to our admirers. The Pharisee in Christ's parable thought of himself as he seemed to be in the light of his own self-love and the esteem of his fellows. Therefore he "prayed *with himself*," and his prayer was really but a catalogue of his virtues. The publican, on the contrary, realized that he stood in the presence of God, wherefore he prayed "*unto Heaven*," whither he would not so much as lift up his eyes.

II. In addition to Jesus' teaching of humility about our spiritual state, we have the example of his lowly life. Let me remember that He became a Canaan, 'a Servant of servants unto His brethren' (Gen. ix: 25). And in this way he ever increased in grace, as the capacity of His perfect human Soul increased. For God "giveth grace unto the lowly." In the words of the old proverb: "The lowest pools are fullest of water."

III. Let me be jealous for the prerogative of my Lord. To him be all the praise for my salvation! I shall not 'sit down in the highest room' (St. Luke xiv: 8), for that belongs to Jesus. But I will take the lowest room that He may call me His friend and lead me "up higher" in the spiritual kingdom.

Monday after the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Zacchæus. Read St. Luke xix: 1-9

I. What a sensation it would cause if a prominent politician, the commissioner of taxes in one of our cities, should suddenly become so frankly interested in Christianity as to expose himself to public ridicule in order to satisfy his desire to know more about it! Yet this was precisely what the rich chief of publicans did when he ran down the street of Jericho and climbed into a sycamore tree, that he might see Jesus. And I also must brave that 'horse-laugh of the world which bleaches the color out of virtue,' that I may climb the tree of the Cross. I shall not hesitate, if I am in my own eyes too "little of stature" to see Jesus otherwise.

II. The reward of Zacchæus' humility was that our Lord *offered* to become his Guest. Elsewhere,

frequently, He *accepted* invitations, but nowhere else did He thus Himself graciously seek anyone's hospitality. "Just as it was to a despised schismatic (St. John iv: 26), and to a despised outcast from the synagogue (St. John ix: 37), that he made a spontaneous revelation of His Messiahship, so it is a despised tax collector that He selects for His spontaneous visit." Thus utter loss of human praise may be a necessary condition of our Lord's acceptance of a soul as His chosen dwelling in the midst of some "City of Sin," like Jericho.

III. Zacchæus confessed his sins and made satisfaction for them to the utmost limit fixed by the law; and also he gave perhaps the entire remainder of his wealth to the poor. He had become so enamored of spiritual poverty that he was thought by some of the Fathers to have reduced himself to utter destitution that he might follow Christ. Let me also crave the increasing sweetness of having no glory except in the Cross of my great God and Saviour, that salvation may come to my house, as it came to that of Zacchæus.

Tuesday after the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Seeking more Grace. Read Rom. xvi: 24; 1 Cor. xvi: 23; 2 Cor. xiii: 14; 2 Peter iii: 18; Rev. xxii: 21.

I. In concluding their epistles, one after the other, the apostles gave their benediction to Christians by praying that the grace of our Lord might be with their spirits. They could bestow no ofter gift of such priceless value to their spiritual children as this. For 'grace upon grace' (St. John i: 16) is the ladder to Heaven.

II. Let me then adopt for myself this prayer of a

holy soul: "Lord Jesu from Whom all grace comes, give me grace to feel my need of grace, and give me grace to seek for grace; then give me grace to receive grace; and when grace is given me, give me grace to use grace, Amen."

III. For I must "grow in grace," or I shall lose what I have. And one principal way to make grace grow is to use it in good works. The Rabbis related that King Solomon's greatest treasure was a vase containing the Elixir of Life, a medicine so powerful that anyone taking even the smallest amount would live forever. Accordingly people from time to time would send to beg a little of the famous elixir, but the king would always refuse. His friends, when they became old, or ill, would beseech him to grant them if it were only ever so tiny a taste, but he would always excuse himself, saying that if he gave it to one, all would be asking for it, and there would be none left for himself. At last he lay on his own deathbed, and sent for his still unopened vase, thinking that he would take its contents and live forever. It was brought and opened, but in it was nothing. The elixir had vanished because it was not used; whereas had it been distributed freely, it would have increased more and more. So it is with the grace of God in our souls. The more we bestow it upon others, the more we shall have for ourselves.

Wednesday after the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

False Gods. Read Ex. xxxii: 1-8

I. There is no idol to be compared to the idol we may make of self. The Psalmist realized this as we learn from his pathetic prayer: 'Explore me O God and

know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there is any way of the idol in me and lead me in the way everlasting' (Ps. cxxxix: 23 f.). As long, therefore, as I yield to self-love, I ought to count myself more guilty than the poor heathen who bow down to wood and stone.

II. Furthermore, I may seem to myself, after a merely superficial examination of my conscience, to be devout toward God, when really I am worshipping the image of Him in myself. The Hebrew of our passage for reading indicates that Aaron and the Israelites intended the golden calf as a representation of Jehovah. "This is thy God, O Israel," they said, "which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (cp. A.V. marg.). "And when Aaron saw it he built an altar before it" and proclaimed "to-morrow is a feast to Jehovah." Only an honest and faithful daily examination will unmask the false god within me, and lead me humbly to Jehovah's Feet.

III. There are always plenty of soothing lies which I can tell myself about my idol. As Aaron explained to Moses: "Whosoever had any gold gave it me; then I cast it unto the fire, and *there came out this calf*," as if he had not "fashioned it with a graving tool"; so I may cajole myself about self-love. But if I have first of all been with Jehovah on the mount, I shall see my self-made idol with the clear eye of another Moses. And I shall burn it and grind it to powder and strew it upon the waters. (Ex. xxxii: 20.)

Thursday after the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Alive Unto God. Read Ps. xvi.

I. "Not only," St. Paul urges us in to-day's Epistle, "must we be dead unto sin, but also we must

be alive unto God through Christ." That higher part of our soul which we distinguish as spirit, must 'cleave steadfastly after God' (Ps. lxxviii : 9). As each soldier of Nehemiah's army with one hand wrought at the building of the city wall, and with the other grasped his sword and shield, so must we lay firm hold on God, for 'the Lord is our strength and our shield' (Ps. xxviii : 7).

II. In the Psalms our soul is spoken of as our "darling" and our "glory," or as the Hebrew words mean literally, our "only one" and our "ornament." In Ps. xvi we are told how to feed this precious spirit. "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup," says David, ". . . . therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth." It is right for me to love myself in this Scriptural way. I will indulge my holy self-love to the full by feeding it upon God.

III. The chief way in which my Lord has appointed for me to feed upon Him is through my communions. And "although God was all-powerful, He could do no more; although He was all-wise, He knew not how to do more; although He was infinitely rich, He had not more to give." Thus the great Doctor of Grace teaches me to prize above all other blessings the most precious Food of the Blessed Sacrament.

Friday after the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Importunity with God. Read St. Matt. xv : 21-28

I. The poor Syro-Phœnician woman of our passage may teach us the great lesson of being importunate in seeking divine mercies. No doubt she perceived that Jesus desired to remain unknown, yet she forced herself upon Him. She appears to have pursued Him

along the way and into the house where He intended to lie hidden. Again and again He seemed to rebuff her, yet she persisted, until, when her trial was over, He abundantly rewarded her faith. For Christ welcomes such determined suit for His blessings. He has taught us that some gifts are to be obtained from God only by our "importunity" or, we might almost translate, "effrontery." And again He speaks of 'every man pressing by force into the kingdom of God.' (St. Luke xi : 8 ; xvi : 16.)

II. There is something more than naïveté in the custom which was followed by some artists of the Ages of Faith of painting their own faces into their pictures of Heaven. It meant that they were determined to have their place among the saints. Surely it was an importunity with their Heavenly Father which was not displeasing to Him (St. Matt. xi : 12).

III. But, if I would storm Heaven, with these mediæval painters, I must, like them, press forward and demand from the priesthood the means of salvation. "The Lord's mercies are new every morning" (Lam. iii : 23) upon the altars of His Church. But shall I esteem my early fasting communions as so many favors bestowed upon God or the parish or the priest? Rather let me go to receive them as a famishing mendicant who there only can obtain the very Bread of Life.

Saturday after the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

The Beautiful Life. Read St. Luke xii : 27-31

I. Travelers in Palestine bring us the most attractive descriptions of the "lilies of the field," which for a long season cover the meadows with their

beautiful red or blue or white blossoms. Our Lord chose these flowers as offering an analogy to beautiful souls. 'If God so clothe the grass, how much more will He clothe you,' He says to His Church. But how does God clothe the lilies with their lovely colors? It is by the almost miraculous effect of the sap. And the sap by which He vests my soul in its robe of spiritual beauty, is sanctifying grace. The spiritual writers of the Church teach us that even the angels marvel at the glory of a soul "in the state of grace."

II. God designs my life to be beautiful in some special way. There is an ancient fable of a king who, on going one day into his garden, found it wilted and dying. On inquiry, he discovered that the oak was pining away because it could not be tall and beautiful like the pine; the pine longed to bear clusters like the vine; the vine was despondent because it could not stand erect and bear fruit like the pomegranite, and so on. Only the daisy was as bright and cheerful as ever; and this was the reason it gave for its contentment: it knew that when the king planted it, he wanted a daisy, not an oak, or a pine, or a vine, or a pomegranite. It ought to be my supreme aspiration to please my Heavenly Father by developing the particular spiritual beauty for which He created me.

III. The promise to our Lord was: "Thy people shall be to Thee free-will offerings in the day of Thy power, in the beauty of holiness." May my soul grow up before Him in beauty so much greater than that of the lilies upon which His Eyes often gazed lovingly, as my immortal soul is higher in the scale of creation than the perishing grass of the field.

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Spiritual Progress. Read the Epistle for the Day.

I. The great Apostle is never tired of urging us on to higher degrees of sanctification. In the Epistle to-day he commands us, "Yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," he pleads elsewhere, "Let us press on unto perfection." Am I still a material, self-indulgent Christian? Am I yet conning over the charts of the primary grades in the School of Perfection?

II. My Lord challenges me to follow Him into the more difficult experiences of His advanced pupils in wisdom. In the beginning I am caressed and encouraged with rewards of spiritual consolation, but presently, as I go on, my Teacher will often seem to leave me to struggle alone. For it is Christ's way to manifest Himself, and then again to hide, in order to make us seek Him. Thus, in the pillar of fire and cloud He led His people on to the Promised Land, and then hid Himself in the Holy of Holies. He shone forth, betokened by stupendous miracles, at His Birth, and was not seen again until His Baptism. After He had revealed himself to men as their Light, He "departed and hid Himself from them" (St. John xii: 35 f.). In the Church of the apostles' days, St. Paul tells us, God worked miracles for them that believed not, but provided simply "prophecy," or, as he means there, "preaching," for believers (1 Cor. xiv: 22). Rightly did Isaiah exclaim, "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour."

III. Let me accept Jesus' challenge by following Him with a holy recklessness, as did the four thousand who were with Him three days, having nothing to eat.

In the end He will not send me away fasting nor risk my fainting by the way. When His time has come, He will surely refresh my famishing spirit by some manifestation of His love greater than I have ever dreamt of.

Monday after the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

The Holy Name of Jesus. Read Acts iv : 1-12

I. Let me have deep reverence for the Human Name of God. It is told of Sir Isaac Newton that he never heard it spoken that he did not uncover his head. No doubt the more he knew of the wonders of creation, the deeper became his reverence for the Incarnate Son of God, "by Whom all things were made." And the meaning of that holy Name is "Saviour." Yet multitudes of men, women, and even children use it only in a curse. How I ought to hallow it, in reparation as well as in gratitude and devotion!

II. Let me learn to labor and suffer for the honor of his Name. If I would be a "chosen vessel unto" Christ, and 'bear His Name before the world,' I, like St. Paul (Acts ix: 15 f.), must be ready to suffer great things for His Name's sake; for it is rightly said that my religion is worth to me just what I will endure for its sake. In the long category of his sufferings for the sacred Name (2 Cor. xi: 23-28), there is more than one affliction which the Apostle chose voluntarily to endure, as if to make a free-will offering of honor to his crucified Saviour. Thus he received "stripes above measure," and was flogged by the Jews with the terrible seven-thonged scourge five times, although as a Roman citizen he was exempt from this penalty, and might easily have obtained protection from the

nearest centurion. (Acts xxii: 25-29.) I also may do a voluntary penance in honor of Jesus by fasting on the weekly anniversary of His Passion.

III. Let me claim the salvation which is promised by God's name of "Jesus,"—"Saviour." "There is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv: 12*b*). Especially will I lift up my hands in this Name, when I pray (Ps. lxiii: 4). And in temptation, I will make the devils to be subject unto me through the Name of Him Who once conquered them on the Cross. (St. Luke x: 17.)

Tuesday after the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

God's Husbandry. Read 1 Cor. iii: 5-9

I. "Ye are God's husbandry," St. Paul declares to us. Our souls are first made fertile by Him, then tilled and then sown with gifts and graces. The clergy are the visible husbandmen who "plant" and "water," but they are only "laborers together with God." What hope, what trust, I ought to gain from the thought that it is Almighty, Omniscient, Infinite Love Which cultivates my soul!

II. It is a solemn thought, that I cannot avoid receiving either a great blessing from God, or His stern judgment, according as I yield or refuse Him an increase of spirituality. "For the land which hath drunk the rain that cometh oft upon it and bringeth forth herbs meet for them, for whose sake *it is also tilled*, receiveth blessing from God; but if it beareth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and nigh unto a curse, whose end is to be burned" (Heb. vi: 7 f. R.V.). The field of our soul is, according to this saying of St. Paul, held responsible for yielding the crop which

the rain of Divine Grace ought to produce from it apart from tillage by the priesthood. Our spiritual life should, he teaches, *of itself*, under God's husbandry alone, produce for their sakes who depend upon us. I may not, therefore, blame my rector or confessor if I am spiritually barren.

III. But, even apart from the warnings of the Scriptures, I will not disappoint the Heavenly Farmer Who spares no labor to make me fruitful of good works. "He that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply, and multiply, your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness, ye being enriched in everything" (2 Cor. ix: 10, R.V.) Thus from the first implanting of His graces, virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, in Baptism, up to the multiplying of our holy deeds through their lodgment and growth in the souls around us, the entire work is God's. He shall begin this day to gather in His harvest from my life.

Wednesday after the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Spiritual Aspirations. Read Rom. xv: 18-21; 2 Cor. v: 9

I. St. Paul had two ambitions. "I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ," he says; "Yea, being ambitious so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation." And again, "We are ambitious, whether at home [in the body] or absent [and with the Lord], to be well pleasing unto [the Lord]." (cp. R. V. marg.) Now these ambitions should be mine also, and they can be attained only through a holy life. What I am will preach the

Gospel of Christ far more loudly than what I say; and I cannot be acceptable to my all-holy Master unless I am sincere in my goodness.

II. But St. Paul prays for an even greater sanctity than this for us. "The God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly," is his petition, "and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame." It is evident from his words, which are the same as those which described the acceptable victim of the Old Testament sacrifices, that he would have us become, like the Lamb of God, perfect oblations to God.

III. Yet he holds before us a still loftier eminence which we may attain through increasing righteousness. "Both He that sanctifieth and they who are [being] sanctified," he dares to say, "are all [children] of One; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." How ennobling, then, is goodness! It makes me a true son of God and brother of Jesus Christ! (Heb. ii: 11.)

Thursday after the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

The Divine Corner-Stone. Read 1 St. Peter ii: 1-8

I. St. Peter gives us the solemn thought that our Lord must be to all people either "a chief Corner-Stone, elect, precious," or "a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense." This is one of many passages in which Christ is treated as the "Head of the corner," or the main stone in the foundation, of the spiritual life. (Ps. cxviii: 22 f.; St. Luke xx: 17 f.) Am I really, in sober, practical fact, basing my daily life on Jesus Christ? Is He consulted as to every plan, made my Partner in every business transaction, and taken with me to every social engagement?

II. Probably all the New Testament writers who refer to our Lord under the figure of the corner-stone had in mind the Rabbinical tradition about the origin of Psalm cxviii: 22. This legend was as follows: During the erection of the second temple, after the return of the Jews from captivity, a stone of peculiar shape was found among the débris of Solomon's temple. This the builders sought to use in the wall in many different places, but it was always a misfit. Finally, when now it had been cast aside and forgotten by the architect, it became necessary to find a stone called the "head of the corner" for the all-important angle between the two principal walls of the temple. But none proved satisfactory out of a large number which were tried, until the builders in despair sought out once more the stone which they had cast aside. It now proved to be exactly what they needed. The moral is that Christ will have no place inferior to the chief one in the stately mansion of my soul. Has my life hitherto been incomplete and disjointed? Then let the stone which my natural faculties had rejected become the Head of the Corner in the edifice of my spiritual life.

III. For my spiritual life is the kingdom of God as it has "come" to me. The corner-stone of the one is for me the "head of the corner" in the other. Behind this present transitory visible universe which shall be "shaken" and removed is "a kingdom that cannot be shaken" (Heb. xii: 27 f.), and it is based upon "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and forever." Let me then build for eternity this day by relating every thought and word and deed to Him.

Friday after the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Our Hope Assured through Christ.

Read Col. ii: 2, 3, 9, 10; 2 Cor. i: 19-20

I. 'In the mystery of God, even Christ, are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden; in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him ye are made full.' Thus St. Paul leads us to hope for a fulness like that of the Human Nature of the God-man. Even in this present life we may be illuminated with His own divine wisdom. Tremendous as his words are, they simply declare to us what is ours through our union with Incarnate God. "Your fulness," says Bishop Lightfoot, commenting on this passage, "comes from His fulness; His [fulness] is transfused into you by virtue of your incorporation in Him." If only we yield ourselves up to our unspeakably close union with our Lord, the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which enriched His human Mind by reflection from his Godhead shall be communicated also to us. Thus saints of the humblest attainments in human learning have yet received ineffable wisdom through constant, close contact with Jesus.

II. My hope that Divine Providence will protect me and supply my every need is made perfectly sure through the Incarnation. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii: 32). It was with this thought that St. Thomas Aquinas once comforted himself, in the midst of a fearful tropical storm, by repeating: "The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us."

III. The most tremendous divine promises are confirmed in our Lord. "For how many soever be

the promises of God, in Him is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen" (R. V.). Once my faith is assured that God has given me His Only-begotten Son to be my Instructor and Saviour, I can no longer doubt even that He will fulfil His promises of bringing me to eternal happiness in the full light of the Beatific Vision, if only I will let Him. Therefore, through Him I am enabled to say "Amen" to all for which He bids me hope and labor.

Saturday after the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Making Profitable Use of Holy Scripture. Read Jer. xxxvi.

I. The entire Bible is intended by God for my instruction in holy doctrine and practice. (2 Tim. iii: 16.) Rejection of any part of it, therefore, may be fatal to my spiritual life. Jehoiakim is shown in our passage cutting away and burning the roll of parchment upon which Jeremiah's prophecies had been written, as section after section was read to him. And thus, it has been truly said, "he threw on the fire his royal house, his doomed city, the temple, and all the people of the land." For in those Scriptures was contained God's last warning to him. I must not commit his error. I must desire to know my Bible thoroughly and must give a reasonable measure of labor to this most important end. Otherwise the passage I deliberately ignore may be the very one wherein God meant to say some necessary word to my soul.

II. Thomas à Kempis used to tell the novices of his community that, if they neglected Bible study, the Holy Books themselves would desire to accuse them saying: "We have piped to you and you

have not danced for the greatness of the joys and the rewards to come, which are contained in our volumes: which God has handed down to you full of comfort and instruction." And, he declared, the Scriptures would also lament with the weeping children in our Lord's parable (St. Luke vii: 32), and would say: "We have mourned to you, and you have not wept for the exceeding miseries and pains to come, which we have frequently denounced to you."

III. The very great value to our souls of the devotional use of Holy Scripture is thus represented to us by our Lord: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." By this He means, as St. Bernard explains, "Clean through *obedience* to the precepts of the word." I shall therefore be purified from every stain as I hearken to my Lord's Voice in the Scriptures.

Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Christian Prophets. Read 1 Thess. ii: 7-12

I. Every adult member of the Christian Church has the endowment, and the mission, to be a "prophet," in the sense of "one who speaks for God." Moses' devout desire, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them," has been fulfilled. For at Pentecost God poured out His Spirit upon all the Church. Since then, her sons and her daughters have prophesied, her young men have seen visions and her old men have dreamed dreams. Upon God's servants and handmaidens, He has poured out of His Spirit, and he commands that they shall prophesy (Acts ii:

16-18). I am, therefore, a prophet of the Apostolic and Catholic Faith. Let me be a *true* prophet, led by the Spirit of God, and bringing forth good fruit in my life, according to Christ's warning in the Gospel to-day.

II. From St. Paul, I can derive two rules for my guidance in my teaching office. The first is a genuine willingness to put myself on the level of children, or of grown people untaught in the ways of the Catholic Church. "We," wrote the great Apostle to his simple-minded provincials, "were babes in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children" (1 Thess. ii: 7, R. V. marg.). He had made himself a child with children, after the fashion of a "nursing mother" seeking to instruct and train her babies. As a Christian prophet I must try always to speak in simple language and without needless display, especially to those who are still, spiritually at least, only children.

III. Once more, in dealing with weak, new converts (who had indeed apostasized), St. Paul displays to me his rule of patience and gentleness. "My little children of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you," he wrote the Galatians, "I could wish to be present with you now and to change my voice [to a softer tone]; for I am perplexed about [the best way to help] you" (iv: 19 f., R. V.). In my ministry, I resolve to be tender and loving like this holy prophet of Christ, with those who have keenly disappointed me, even if they have lapsed into some heretical sect.

Monday after the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Persistence in Seeking Conversions.

Read 1 Thess. ii : 2 ; iii : 7 ff ; 2 Thess. iii : 1

I. Even the heroic St. Paul was depressed by the rejection, persecution and apparent failure which he often encountered. It was hard for him to attempt the evangelization of Thessalonica, after his scourging and imprisonment at Philippi. "Even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi," he wrote to the Thessalonians, "we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God in much conflict [with ourselves]." No doubt it was only after a great struggle with himself that he conquered his reluctance to preach the Gospel, while the wounds of his flogging at Philippi were yet unhealed. It is but natural then that, when I have suffered contumely, perhaps, in a previous effort to instruct or help another soul, I also should be loath to try again either with it or with others. But as I share St. Paul's struggle with himself, let me also participate in his victory.

II. He has handed down to me the two great incentives by which he was drawn irresistibly to make a fresh effort, after every disaster in his ministry. "Now we live," that is, "we are full of the joy of life," he declared to the Thessalonians, "if ye stand fast in the Lord." Let the most interesting of all my plans be to win souls ; let success in these enterprises bring me more happiness than aught else in my life, and I shall certainly never desist from my ministry, no matter what disappointments and failures may attend it.

III. The other motive by which St. Paul was filled with fresh energy after every calamity to the churches

under his care, was his zeal "that the word of the Lord might run and be glorified with men" (R. V.). In contrast to this free course of the divine word was its 'being bound' (2 Timothy ii: 9); and Christ's great minister could rejoice in its freedom, although he himself was a prisoner facing his death. Moreover, all succeeding generations of Catholics have caught from him a great burning zeal for the "cursus Evangelii," or "course of the Gospel," through the whole world. Let me give my very life itself, if so I can add a little to the freedom and speed of its running.

Tuesday after the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Mary's Assumption and Ours. Read Rev. xii.

I. Many of the Fathers, notably St. Epiphanius, interpreted the first verses of our chapter as being a revelation of the Blessed Virgin's assumption. St. John, it seems, was thinking of that sorrowful hour when he had knelt beside the dead body of his adopted mother, and then suddenly she had been rapt away from the lowly dwelling, and in Spirit he had beheld her with her head among the stars and the moon already under her feet, "clothed," that is "enveloped," by the Arms of the Sun of Righteousness. Yet, in his vision, she was held by her Son's fervent love midway between heaven and earth, as being in union with Him and a partaker of His own great work of intercession for souls.

II. As St. John proceeds in the records of his vision, it becomes apparent that the Blessed Virgin is in her assumption a type of the Church on earth. We also are, even now, caught up in the Arms of Divine Love out of this perishing world. We live in

two worlds, our feet treading on the earth, but our heads among the stars. For we are *dead*: "Ye are dead," declares St. Paul, "and your life is hid with Christ in God." We are *risen*: 'Ye are then risen with Christ,' the Apostle says, again. And we are *ascended* to "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, . . . and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus."

III. An ancient title of the event upon which we are reflecting is "the repose of the Blessed Virgin." Now, our Lord has granted us a real measure of spiritual repose which we claim when we allow ourselves to rest in His Divine Arms, realizing our union with Him. 'God *hath given* us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord' (1 Cor. xv: 57): (a) "I have overcome *the world*"; (b) 'God sent His Son and condemned *sin in the flesh*, that righteousness might be revealed in us'; (c) "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting Arms. And He shall thrust out *the enemy* from before thee." "In Christ" I am made to be more than conqueror of the world, the flesh and the devil, that I may become a mediator with Christ and His blessed mother.

Wednesday after the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

The Court of the King of Kings. Read Psalm xlv.

I. David has "in Spirit" painted us a wonderful picture of our Lord reigning in glory. Jesus is brought before us as the God-man: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," exclaims the Psalmist; and then addressing Christ in His Humanity, he continues: "God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil

of gladness *above Thy fellows.*" Let me also, with my spiritual vision, behold my ascended Saviour, seated at the Right Hand of His Father.

II. Now we are allowed to see the court of King Jesus, and, first of all the saints, the Blessed Virgin-Mother: "Upon Thy Right Hand," David sings, "doth stand the Queen in gold of Ophir." She is bidden to adore her Blessed Son: "He is thy Lord God, and worship thou Him," the Holy Spirit directs her, through the Psalmist. Yet he plainly declares her to be preëminent among all her fellow-creatures, saying, "The richest among the peoples shall entreat thy favor." The Church, spoken of as the "King's Daughter," now enters. She is conducted before her Heavenly Father in "raiment of needle work," that is, ornamented with various devices, signifying the various degrees and kinds of holiness, secular and religious, lay and clerical, to which the saints have attained. And the Religious, "the virgins her companions that follow her," are brought to the Queen, no doubt to receive her maternal blessing; and with her they enter the King's palace.

III. The spiritual meaning of the Psalm is, therefore, that the Blessed Virgin has been caught up into Christ's long labor of saving souls. Her throne in Heaven is not, any more than His, an ornamental sinecure. As he "ever liveth to make intercession for us," so she lifts up her pleading hands in our behalf. Let me often seek the prayer of this most righteous one, for it 'availeth much in its working' (St. James v: 16, R. V.).

Thursday after the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Mary's Mediatorship and Ours. Read Exodus xxxii : 7-14

I. The principle that underlies human mediatorship is clearly revealed in our passage. The episode wonderfully exemplifies the truth that our Lord helps souls mediately, showing mercy upon one at the prayer of another. He might have destroyed the worshippers of the golden calf without permitting any intervention by Moses; He might, on the other hand, have forgiven the idolaters out of His own infinite love for them. But, in fact, He did neither of these things. He revealed the sin of His people to His saintly servant there before Him on the mount, in order that He might incite Moses to intercede for his brethren. "He would have destroyed them," the Psalmist says, "had not Moses, His chosen, stood before Him in the gap, to turn away His wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy them." How much more shall she avail, standing in the breach between divine wrath and sinners, who is the Daughter, Spouse and Mother of God!

II. Yet every Christian partakes of this same power to intercede, and labor, for the salvation of souls. The twelve stars which form her diadem (Rev. xii: 1) are around our heads also, since we have the twelve apostles praying for us. The moon is under our feet, for she, who is the faithful witness in Heaven and draws all her radiance from the Sun of Righteousness, can refuse us nothing which she can obtain from her Divine Son. We, like her, are heart to Heart with Him Who is a very Furnace of divine charity. His Arms are around us, as they were around the Cross, not only because He loves our

souls, but because we, like the Cross, are the instrument by which He would redeem the world.

III. The commission of our mediatorship is even more explicit than any of which we know given to our Virgin Mother. "I am come to *send* fire on the earth," our Lord said, showing that He expected us to spread the fire of holy love. "I am the Light of the World," He declared, but then afterward, "Ye are the light of the world." Let me model my helpfulness after my Lord's. Light cheers and strengthens the weary, the lonely and the sick. How tender was the Light of the World! Those in trouble or perplexity He aways addressed by the loving term, "children." And how fervent He was in even the simplest work He did for souls! Thus St. Mark relates that when He took little children up in His Arms and laid His Hands upon them in benediction He 'blessed them *fervently*' (x: 16).

Friday after the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Mode of Our Mediatorial Service. Read St. Luke x: 30-37

I. If we would have part and lot with Christ in saving the world we must develop a cosmopolitan spirit like His. "The world is my parish," each one of us ought to say. The priest in our Lord's parable passed by on the other side entirely ignoring the wounded, half-dead Samaritan. No doubt he would have helped some classes of cases, but this sufferer did not come within the limits of his proper sphere. But Jesus, in the very word He uses for neighbor, indicates that any soul and every soul is to be the object of our supernatural love. For it means "the one

next," suggesting any person we rub elbows with in the car or market-place.

II. We must avoid self-pleasing. The Levite did go so far as to draw near the sufferer and look upon him, but then he also passed by on the other side, no doubt because the bloody, mire-bespattered victim was repulsive to his eyes. And people who are needy, physically, mentally, or spiritually, are usually not pleasing objects to our natural senses. But Lazarus is beautiful, if only we realize that he is identified with Christ. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren," saith Incarnate God, "ye have done it unto Me."

III. Down the back and across the shoulders of every Jerusalem ass was marked a cross, and upon this the Good Samaritan laid his wounded neighbor. We must never be satisfied with bestowing temporal benefits, or teaching the new, weak convert a religion with the distasteful cross left out. This would be to deprive his sick soul of the only medicine which can cure it. But how shall we induce the self-indulgent and the careless to accept a religion marked all over with crosses? We shall accomplish it in this way: Let us first approach them in the natural sphere with the wine and oil of sympathy and gentleness. Then we must steady them by an unselfishness which is willing to walk while they ride. So shall we bring them safe to the inn of the Catholic Church.

Saturday after the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Mediators Through Christ. Read Psalm lxxiii: 1-17

I. The Blessed Virgin carried Christ on her "visitation," and when she entered her cousin's house,

St. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. Now I am to be, like Mary, a sacrament of godliness, because I also bear Christ in my breast. But is it the effect of my life that when I enter the homes of those who know me best I kindle the flame of the Blessed Spirit in their hearts?

II. The Light which dwells within us (2 Cor. iv: 6) has always been God's Own Loving Kindness to people. Once It traveled through the wilderness with Israel in a tent, and was Shade to them by day and Light by night. In the tabernacle It dwelt above the mercy seat where penitent David came to beg for his son's life, and went away comforted in his bereavement, because he had, in spiritual vision, beheld God's unfailing love still burning steadily there behind the veil. Thither, too, the Psalmist could carry his doubt of God's justice and goodness to His own servants, insoluble until he went into the sanctuary and by faith beheld the Light of divine mercy 'dwelling between the cherubim.' Let me never forget that my heart also is now a mercy-seat of Jesus' love.

III. Jehovah spoke to His ancient people through the veil under the tender figure of a mother bird brooding over her young, saying, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it" (Psalm lxxxi: 10). And still he longs to feed hungry souls with the bread of life. Still He desires to speak to them from His dwelling-place within me. I resolve that to-day I will try to listen with His ears, and to speak with His voice, that I may not fail to be the instrument of His love.

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Priesthood of the Laity. Read the Epistle for the Day.

I. In a study of Israel's long journey through the desert it is at first inexplicable how they always had a spring of water at the end of their day's wearisome march. Now, St. Paul explains to us that "they did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." Herein we have a wonderful Old Testament picture of the mercy and love of the true High-priest. And He has given to each of His followers some share in this holy Priesthood (1 St. Peter ii: 5). Am I, then, striving to be so full of grace, that out of my heart shall flow rivers of living water (St. John vii: 38).

II. The great example of lay priesthood is the Blessed Mother. For she risked that reputation for purity which is the dearest possession of a holy woman, when she consented to become the Mother of God. She had no assurance that the Paternity of her Child would be revealed to St. Joseph. He might well cast her off, or even deliver her to a shameful death, yet, even at the risk of all, she elected to become the agent of our salvation. I must be willing, after her example, even to lay down my life for the brethren (1 St. John iii: 16).

III. As in the ancient temple worship, the high-priest passed behind the veil into the Holy of Holies and his assistant priests remained without, so we are taught in the Scriptures to think of Jesus in Heaven as the "Priest upon His throne" and of ourselves as "workers together with Him," outside the veil. But let me have ever in mind that God's people deserve perfection in those, clerics or laymen, who minis-

ter to them. "An High-priest," says St. Paul, "*became* us, Who is holy, guileless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. vii: 26). How, then, shall I, a poor lay priest on earth, be worthy to serve my brethren save as I am covered with the vestments of Jesus' righteousness? "I will clothe her priests with salvation," the Divine High-priest has promised concerning His Church, "and her saints shall shout aloud for joy."

Monday after the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

The Priesthood of Mary. Read Judges v: 24-27, 31

I. Jael has always been regarded by the Church as a type of the Blessed Virgin. The cruel enemy whom she slew had for long been a terror to the nomadic women of her people. Sisera would descend suddenly upon their encampments and carry them away to be his slaves, after he had slain their men. Therefore justly Deborah sang, 'Blessed *among* women shall Jael be, blessed shall she be *among* women in the tent.' And the Holy Virgin, by her heroic consent to become the agent of the Incarnation, smote through the temples the arch enemy of our race.

II. It is in the light of Mary's priesthood through her union with Christ, that we can understand the ancient, true text of St. Luke ii: 22: "And when the days of *their* purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord." For not even the Blessed Virgin, not to say St. Joseph or our Lord, fell under the law requiring purification. The Evangelist means that God's people were in a mysterious, spiritual way purified through the penance Mary per-

formed by the self-mortification of her withdrawal for the required time of purification. Remember, my soul, that "the eternal womanly leads us upward and on" in the course of our lay priesthood, by the path of penance and self-humiliation.

III. Blessed Mary, by her example, ministers greater holiness to God's people. St. Athanasius points out to us that "Christ was not stained in her, but sanctified her." And St. Jerome says, "Virginity is consecrated to me in the persons of Mary and of Christ." Let me remember that unto me, as to the Blessed Virgin, "a Son is given." And "deep calleth unto deep," the deep of Jesus in the heart of weak Christians with all the waves and storms of temptations going over them, crying out to the deep of His Presence committed unto me that I might make His love and power known.

Tuesday after the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

The Moon in God's Firmament. Read Psalm lxxxix: 2-37

I. Mary in Heaven is "the faithful witness" of Jesus' power to develop and perfect a soul. Now, I am Mary's child. She "brought forth her First-born,"—we are her other children; as the Psalmist says, "I am the son of Thine handmaid" (Ps. cxvi: 16). I intend to follow my holy Mother in the way of perfection.

II. As Mary, in her assumption, saw earth as a tiny speck, so ought we to regard it. From the viewpoint of earth, sorrow bulks large, human life seems all. But from the viewpoint of Mary lifted above the world in the Arms of Christ, earthly cares appear very tiny; this life is seen to be but a parenthesis between

two eternities. From this valley of the shadow of death we behold but the dark under side of the cloud, but from the arch of the heavens we see the upper side, golden in the sun's rays. Thus I learn from Mary that lofty viewpoint from which I can despise the folly of worldliness.

III. All things which the Blessed Virgin in Heaven receives come to her through the Sacred Heart of her Son. She beholds the world, its needs, sorrows and sins, only as they are mirrored in Jesus. Sweet mother, teach me to see my environment, my friends and enemies, my work and my play, just as they appear in the Mind and Heart of Christ.

Wednesday after the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Entering into the Kingdom of God. Read St. Mark xii: 28-34

I. In the epistle for this week we are directed to walk as children of light, that is as citizens of the Kingdom and members of God's heavenly household. Now, the scribe in our passage for reading was "not far from the Kingdom of God." Let us see wherein lay his separateness. We note first that whereas our Blessed Lord twice indicated or perhaps even pronounced the name "Jehovah," the scribe scrupulously avoided any reference to that sacred title of God. And in this he represented those Christians who fall short of the Kingdom through over-emphasis upon ritual or other external practices of religion. If we would be children of the Kingdom our first thought must be to follow our Lord and imitate Him.

II. The inquirer had not asked our Lord about the love of his neighbor; and when Jesus had asserted the *two* greatest commandments, saying that the

second is "like" the first, he, although outwardly agreeing with the Master, made a separation between the love of God and that of man. But in the Kingdom we include the love of men in our love of God, and the two are, therefore, inseparable.

III. The scribe changed our Lord's expression, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy *mind*," or "*reason*," to "love Him with all the *understanding*," or "*critical judgment*." Now, the exercise of this latter intellectual function was especially dear to the scribes. Their danger, indeed, was intellectual pride. In the Kingdom, he would not have confined himself to loving God and his neighbor with the faculty he was fondest of using. Let me learn from his failure in this regard to make my acts of love the expression of my whole spiritual nature. As Bengel wisely urges, "If thou art not far, enter; otherwise it would have been better for thee to have been far off." I must enter into the very midst of the Kingdom of God.

Thursday after the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Love of our Neighbor in the Kingdom. Read 1 Thess. i: 6-10

I. Out of his rich experience, the Church's greatest missionary has recorded for us some principles of spiritual wisdom, that by following them we may help our fellow Christians. In our passage he displays one of these. For, when he needed to encourage the Thessalonians to endure the discipline of their religion, he reminded them that their native Macedonia had produced one of the world's greatest soldiers and conquerors. 'From you,' he said, 'sounded out as a trumpet the word of the Lord; in every place your

faith to Godward is gone forth as a living thing.' It is an allusion, St. Chrysostom explains, to Alexander going forth from their country. Thus St. Paul appealed to their patriotic pride which had already led them to do great things for the Gospel of Christ, and would accomplish yet more through them. And I, by appealing to the noble natural virtues in my neighbor, can often lead him to consecrate them in my Lord's service.

II. A similar mode of helping one's fellows appears later in this epistle. 'We beseech you, brethren,' the Apostle urges, 'that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, just as also ye are walking, so ye would abound more and more' (iv: 1). It is the part of love fully and gladly to recognize all that is good in our neighbor's spiritual life. Then we can lead him on to even better things.

III. Love will enable us to discern the peculiar need of the soul we try to help. Our great teacher would have us discriminate carefully among different classes of souls. "Now we exhort you, brethren," he wrote the Thessalonians, "warn them that are unruly, comfort the faint hearted, support the weak, be patient toward all men." As I learn to love my neighbor in the degree I love myself I shall learn to be in St. Paul's own way "all things to all men."

Friday after the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Use of Just Praise. Read 1 St. Tim. i: 15-19

I. By his expression, "the mammon of unrighteousness," our Lord meant all those things which may readily be turned to occasions of sin. Of these *praise*

is perhaps the most notable. For it may breed in us pride, the sin by which Satan fell (1 St. Tim. iii: 6). But it may also become a stimulus to holiness, if we receive it for our encouragement. Thus, when St. Paul would urge his less heroic "son in the Gospel" to hold the Faith and a good conscience, he wrote to St Timothy: 'This charge I commit unto thee according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou in them as armor mightest war the good warfare.' He refers, probably, to laudatory prophecies which had been pronounced at St. Timothy's consecration to the episcopate. When praise of me is true, therefore, I ought to accept it to inspire me with new zeal and courage.

II. A parallel instance of the use St. Paul made of praise appears in this same letter to St. Timothy: "Fight the good fight of the Faith, lay hold on the eternal life, whereunto thou wast called and didst confess the good confession before many witnesses" (1 St. Tim. vi: 12, A. V. marg.). No doubt he was reminding St. Timothy in these words, of the latter's trial before Nero (Heb. xiii: 23), when he had loyally and bravely confessed himself a Christian. It is an act of charity in my friends to remind me of any past occasion upon which I have proved faithful to my Lord, that I may be strengthened to like valor in my coming trials.

III. The true matter of Christian pride is our sonship to Almighty God. We may not seek vainglorious satisfaction in eminence among men. "We must sacrifice honor in this world," says St. Ignatius Loyola, "to be honored hereafter; as our Blessed Lord was little esteemed, until after He rose." But pride in our heavenly caste is lawful for us and is a powerful protection from sin. 'Whosoever is born of God,'

St. John declares, 'sinneth not, but his having been born of God keepeth him, and the Evil One toucheth him not.' (1 St. John v: 18.)

Saturday after the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Use of Monotony. Read Job vi: 1-6

I. Job, after the monotony of his long suffering, cried out, "Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt, or is there any taste in the white of an egg," or, literally, "in the slime of insipidness." Now, albumen *is* tasteless, but it contains many most wholesome elements of food. So it is also with monotony, if we will but learn to appreciate the blessings it contains for us.

II. For, (a) we can be very much more humble amid the daily round of simple, perhaps menial, tasks. (b) When our work is the same from day to day, it becomes so mechanical from habit that we are very little distracted from the constant practice of God's Presence with us, which is one of the principal exercises by which we may attain perfection.

III. (c) Our Lord's precept, "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect," can be as really fulfiled by our becoming perfect in little, oft-repeated tasks, as in the greatest achievements. And such perfectness is just as precious to our Lord, while, of course, it is far easier to gain. I resolve, therefore, to perform well the mere monotonous routine duties of this day. For thus in my everyday tasks I shall be acquiring a perfection like that of my Heavenly Father when He spread the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth.

Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Christ's House of Prayer Within Us.

Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. When our Lord came in view of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the scene before him might, as it seems, have brought Him great joy. From before Him down the slope of the Mount of Olives and across the valley, up to and within the gates of the city stretched the long lines of people shouting the Messianic praises to Him. It was His hour of triumph. Yet He bowed His Face upon His Hands and wept. Why? Because the city thus receiving Him as its King had not a heart of prayer. Beneath the golden dome of its temple was, not His house of prayer, but a den of thieves, and therefore it was doomed to become the prey of an implacable, devastating foe. If I would be safe from my spiritual enemies, my heart must be an oratory where I am ever instant in prayer.

II. For prayer in the hour of Satan's assault is sure to bring me the power to resist. Thus the Psalmist ascribed his victory over his foe to the power which had been given in response to his supplication, saying, 'In that day that I called and Thou answeredst me, Thou didst embolden my heart with strength.'

III. St. Anthony fled from the worldliness and sensuality which surrounded him as a youth to a ruined tower, where he laid aside his rank and wealth and became a hermit. There he was frequently beset by the evil spirits seeking to drag him from his retreat. On one such occasion, when the trembling peasants had been hearing sounds of a terrible strife, suddenly the clear voice of the young man rang out above the uproar, chanting Psalm lxviii: "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.' And as he sang the de-

mons were silenced and driven away. So at the voice of my prayer also shall they that hate Christ flee before Him.

Monday after the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Keeping Our Resolutions (I) Read Psalm cxvi: 15-19

I. Among the great crowd which so loudly cried Hosanna to Jesus, were some who, only five days later, would be crying "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" This fickleness is like the disloyalty of a Christian soul, which welcomes lofty thoughts, accepts noble ideals and forms good and helpful resolutions, perhaps during some Mission or Retreat, and then repudiates its allegiance to Christ, at the challenge of His foes.

II. Even during our Lord's entry into Jerusalem, most of His friends fell back before the frowns and sneers of the Pharisees, so that only boys seem to have continued praising him, after the procession reached the temple precincts. But the Psalmist puts into our mouths a promise of a more loyal fellowship with the Crucified: "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the sight of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem." Do I ever refrain from bearing my witness to Christ by some outward reverence and devotion in subservience to the prejudices or conventions of men?

III. I must try to be quite willing to bear obloquy or ridicule for Jesus' sake. There are fools for money, and fools for pleasure, and for many other transitory things. Let me aspire to be a fool for Christ. He was thought to be beside Himself (St. Mark iii: 21), and His great Apostle, also, was charged with mad-

ness (2 Cor. v: 13; 1 Cor. iv: 10). What an honor it is, therefore, for me to be thought a fool because of my loyalty to Christ.

Tuesday after the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Keeping Our Resolutions (II) Read Ex. xxiv: 9-11; Lev. x: 1-2

I. Nadab and Abihu attained to the vision of God and received from Him almost unparalleled favors. And we note also that they are especially mentioned after Moses in the account of that theophany, apparently because of their eminence above the seventy elders. Yet these souls, after having come so close to God and seen His beauty and truth, fell away and were swallowed up in an earthquake. Is it not sometimes so with the visions of Christ granted to me in special divine favor towards my soul? Are they not often swallowed up by the earthiness of my nature or in the materialism of the world around me?

II. In Retreat, at my prayers, or in the public worship of the Church, I am often granted a knowledge of myself which might be of the greatest value in my spiritual life. But then I go away and forget the divine word which has thus shown me to myself. I am "like unto a man beholding himself in a glass; for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (St. James i: 23 f.).

III. Let me inflame myself with a great anger against the evil one who thus robs me even of the visions of God and my own soul, from which an advance in my spiritual progress would spring. Satan cares not how many pious beginnings I make, so long as he can destroy them before they grow to maturity. As Pharaoh was perfectly willing that any number of

male children should be born to the Hebrew women, provided only he could kill them in infancy one by one, so the devil is satisfied if he may slay the offspring of our soul before they are strong enough to do our Lord service. In very shame, and zeal for Jesus' honor, I resolve both to make my resolutions bravely, and to fulfil them to the end.

Wednesday after the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Progressive Illumination. Read St. Matt. iii: 11-17

I. An ancient Christian word for Holy Baptism was "Illumination." That title seems to have originated in St. Paul's words in Hebrews x: 32: "Call to remembrance the former days, in which . . . . ye were illuminated," that is, "baptized." The thought is, that in our baptism we are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, Who is the Flame of divine charity. It is by this Fire of God (cp. 2 St. Tim. i: 6, R. V. marg.) that I must be illuminated more and more.

II. When St. John Baptist, standing in the Jordan, was administering his baptism of repentance, he compared it to Christian Baptism in the following remarkable terms: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I; . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire," which was a Hebraism for "the fire of the Holy Ghost." Thus the Saint suggested that the Flame of the Blessed Spirit is a stream like the flood of the Jordan; and that, as the swelling tide of the river, fed by the spring rains, was rising ever higher on its banks, so the Stream of the Divine Fire increases steadily in warmth and light in the receptive Christian soul.

III. Our Lord Himself gives us a wonderful and beautiful example of the way our faithfulness to the Holy Ghost in our devotional life brings us a constant increase of His illumination. The Lord's Prayer seems to have sprung from the Eighteen Prayers of the Synagogue (which Christ was accustomed to say every Sabbath), but it is incalculably more spiritual, and more perfect, in its combination of supplication and praise, than the elements from which it is composed. As I live, more and more habitually, under the illuminating influence of the Holy Ghost, I shall have an ever-increasing power to combine the most spiritual experiences of my past into still more perfect acts of devotion.

Thursday after the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Steadfastness in Waiting for the Vision. Read Habak. ii : 1-4

I. The ancient prophet and priest who stood upon the watch tower of Jerusalem, straining his eyes to catch the first glimpse of Israel's Redeemer, is a type of God's people in all ages. We, like him, are surrounded by our foes, and the darkness of temptation may at any time gather around us. Let us then treasure the promise given to Habakkuk: "The vision is yet for the appointed time and it hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry," or, literally, "be behind time" (A.V. marg.).

II. Through a New Testament prophet and priest, the divine assurances given to his Old Testament brother are reiterated and confirmed. Christ, wrote St. Paul to his beloved Philippians, "is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. Therefore, my brethren, stand fast in the Lord" (iii : 21; iv : 1). And

again, with a clarion note of triumph, he cried out to the Corinthians: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable."

III. When the unstable Israelites would have returned to their servitude under Pharaoh and their Egyptian taskmasters, because they feared the greatness and ferocity of his army, Moses commanded them, "Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you to-day." And no sooner had they halted, displaying but a little faith and courage, than Jehovah in the pillar of fire and cloud came between them and their foes. Let me ever remember in my times of spiritual unrest that the Lord fighteth for me, 'His glory is my rereward.' His almighty power surrounds me for walls and bulwarks (Isa. lviii: 8). And my salvation is to sit still (Isa. xxx: 7).

Friday after the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Fellowship with Christ. Read Jonah i: 1-15

I. In the experience of God's rebellious prophet we find a warning for ourselves, that is, that a nemesis pursues a soul which departs from fellowship with our Lord. Jonah fled from his Zabulon hills to the strange sea, which every Israelite regarded as pagan. His intention was to escape from the presence of God, that he might find rest from the yoke of his Master. But Jehovah cast upon him a storm out of those same native cliffs of his, while he lay sleeping in the cabin of the vessel. I might indeed gain an apparent peace by shaking off the light and easy burden of Jesus' yoke, but out of my past Christian experience would

come, very soon, a storm of my Lord's reproaches and appeals which would cast me forth out of my false repose.

II. Surely there could be no reason for our seeking to escape from the blessed fellowship of our Saviour, except that we have come to know ourselves to be of a disposition incompatible with His. For "can two walk together except they be agreed?" Let me remember that I must "walk worthy of the Lord" (Col. i: 10). This day, let my every thought, word and act be becoming one whose "citizenship is in Heaven" with Jesus (Phil. iii: 20, A.V. marg.).

III. The reason, says St. Paul, that Christ died for us is "that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thess. v: 10). And his meaning is greatly deepened for us, if we realize that his words "wake or sleep" signify also "live or die." In this present life our generous Lord rewards us for faithfulness to Himself during our waking hours, by coming oftentimes into our dreams; as the Psalmist says, 'He giveth to his beloved in sleep.' And even the sleep of death has no terrors for us, for 'dying, behold we live,' in a closer and tenderer union with Jesus than we had ever attained before!

Saturday after the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Preparation of Heart for Worship. Read Psalm xxvi: 6-12

I. The priestly Psalmist desired to wash his hands in the cleansing laver of innocency before he dared approach even the ancient altar of the Levitical burnt offering. And Christian priests since the primitive ages of the Church have recited his psalm and ceremonially bathed their hands with water just before

offering the Holy Sacrifice. For this washing of the hands is indicative of the interior cleansing of the worshipper's heart. 'The right hand of the wicked is full of spurious gifts to God.' Let our right hand present to Him none but true and pure offerings of a worship made with adoring hearts.

II. There is one special precept in this regard which we have received from our Lord Himself. When there is any matter of anger or hatred between our brother man and ourselves, we must leave our gift before the altar while we go and become reconciled to him; after that we may come and offer our gift. I must never be content to remain supinely divorced from the privilege of making my offering to God, whether it be my alms, myself in Holy Communion, or the Holy Sacrifice by the priest's hands. I will rather put away the malice out of my heart. For on the one hand I am *commanded* to offer my gift; on the other I am told that it will be acceptable to God only when it is made from a heart which is in charity with my fellow-men.

III. Let me approach the worship of my Lord in meditation and prayer and public service, with a humble heart. As Ruth lay down at the feet of Boaz and thereupon he lifted her to his side as his wife, so must I place myself at the feet of Jesus that He may exalt me to perfect union with Himself. I must never imagine that I am receiving special miraculous favors, nor think myself worthy of visions, special revelations, and the like. Rather will I seek for utter abjection, and abase myself to the uttermost before my Lord; since in all the annals of the saints it is ever the lowliest soul which He embraces most ardently as His bride.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

St. Paul's Spiritual Poverty. Read 1 St. Tim. i: 12-16

I. The great Apostle was perfectly frank and severely honest with himself in regard to the sins of his past life. He does not hesitate to declare himself to have been "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious," or, literally, "insolently oppressive." And in the Acts written by St. Luke under his direction he speaks of himself as one who had "made havoc of the Church, entering into every house and haling men and women committed them to prison." In this latter passage the Greek word translated "made havoc" means literally "ravage," the writer's reference being, apparently, to Psalm lxxx: 13: "The wild boar out of the wood doth ravage [God's vineyard]." (Acts viii: 3; cp. xxvi: 11.) Again he declares that in those days of his enmity against Christ he had 'breathed in an atmosphere of threatenings and slaughter against His disciples' (Acts ix: 1). To cite but one more instance, he reproaches himself that 'beyond measure he had persecuted the Church of God and sacked it, as soldiers despoil a captured city' (Gal. i: 13). No one would have dreamed of rebuking our Lord's great saint in such terms as these in which he accuses himself.

II. Yet, with equal frankness, he recognizes all the partial excuses he had for his evil doing. "I obtained mercy," he says, "because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." There is no bitterness of remorse in his repentance, nor any sham humility in his self-examination. Following his lead, let me be at once entirely honest with my own deceitful heart, and yet never accuse myself of temptations, or mistakes, or inadvertent injury of others, as being sins.

III. In his utter spiritual poverty St. Paul put his whole dependence upon our Lord. 'The grace of Christ was exceeding abundant above his sin, and brought with it faith, and love from the Sacred Heart.' Thus he bears witness to the boundless mercy and love of Jesus to the "chief of sinners." No emotional burst of pseudo humility, no scrupulous examination of conscience can reveal to me my need of God so convincingly as a plain recognition of myself, as I really am.

Monday after the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Practical Applications of Spiritual Poverty. Read Isa. xxxix.

I. The Holy Scriptures present to me certain episodes in the lives of typical persons for my instruction in Christian virtues. Thus Absalom is brought before us as one possessing great physical beauty and as being proud of it, especially of his long hair (2 Sam. xiv: 25 f.). But in the end this very object of his vanity became the means of his death. For in his flight from David's army his flying locks caught on the thick boughs of a great oak so that he was plucked from his mule and hung suspended, a mark for the darts of his enemies. May God defend me from the folly of any such vainglorious regard for myself.

II. The fatal nemesis which attends upon pride of wealth is disclosed to us in the life of Hezekiah. With a childish vanity he showed the ambassadors of the Babylonian king "the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures; there was nothing in his house nor in all his dominion that Hezekiah showed them not." In the event, as Isaiah that day prophe-

sied to him, all his wealth was carried away to Babylon by the monarch whose cupidity he had thus aroused. I resolve to learn from his experience to practice holy poverty as to all that I possess. For what have I that I did not receive, and if I have received it, why should I glory as if I had not received it?

III. But when I am tempted to be proud of successful achievements, I will strive to remember that Satan himself fell by this kind of vainglory. He bore the glorious title of "The Morning Star," as though possessed of wondrous beauty and light. And it was pride in his own splendor which wrought his fall. Now, when the seventy returned joyfully proclaiming the success they had met in their mission, our Lord warned them by holding up before them the fate of the devil. 'He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fallen from heaven.' In any time of elation over my doings for Christ, I will steady myself with the fear of falling into the condemnation of the devil.

Tuesday after the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Freedom from Personal Ambition. Read St. Matt. xii: 14-21

I. Frequently our Lord charged those whom He helped miraculously that they should not make Him known. There were different reasons for this, but one of these is plainly revealed in our passage. It was that He might fulfil that saying of God through the prophet Isaiah about Him: "Behold My Servant Whom I have chosen, My Beloved, in Whom My Soul is well pleased; . . . He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets." That is to say, the Messiah was to be one utterly lacking personal ambition. Christ might have won

in His strife with the Pharisees by performing famous miracles. But these would have made His Passion impossible, and He chose to conquer through the abjection and anguish of His Cross.

II. In performing our good works we ought to seek only the glory of our Heavenly Father. This is taught us as we hear the familiar words of our Lord's precept spoken from the altar: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Which is in Heaven."

III. Joab was but a rough soldier serving a king who had almost forfeited his respect. Yet when he had practically captured the city Rabbah, he sent word to David, saying: "Gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it; lest I take the city and it be called after my name." He was willing to do all the work and run the risks of the siege and then to make David the recipient of all the honor. Now, I serve the King of kings and Lord of lords, Who merits, if I could render it, my infinite reverence and devotion. Shall I not loyally seek His honor rather than my own?

Wednesday after the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Willingness to endure Temporal Adversity. Read 1 Cor. viii: 8-13

I. Pride often springs from a long-unbroken series of temporal blessings. Even David, perhaps looking back to the mortal sins he had committed in the time of his too-great influence, confessed "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved." But when Jehovah hid His Face from David, then was the king troubled, and cried to the Lord, and made his suppli-

cation. Lowly dependence upon God springs from that sincere conviction of our own weakness, which is deepened by affliction patiently borne.

II. Most of us have enough for our actual needs and but little more. Now this is really a matter for deep gratitude to our Lord. For, as St. Bernard points out, commenting on the Wise Man's saying, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," there is spiritual danger in both extreme wealth and in destitution. "Feed me with food convenient for me," Solomon continues, "lest I be full, and deny Thee and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain" (Prov. xxx : 9).

III. St. Paul teaches us that all merely natural blessings are ultimately indifferent in themselves. Food, he says, "cannot bring us into the Presence of God." Therefore, I shall not permit myself to grieve if I am deprived of temperal prosperity, since it cannot of itself advance me toward the ultimate goal of my efforts, the Beatific Vision of God.

Thursday after the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

The Discipline of Failure. Read 1 Cor. iv : 9-16

I. It is comparatively easy to seek for God at times when we feel encouraged by successes; but it is hard to persevere when our courage has been chilled by our failure. But Isaiah teaches us that we are to seek through both darkness and light. "The morning cometh and also the night," he makes the watchman say, 'If you seek, *seek*!' (Isa. xxi : 12). Through prosperity and adversity, fervor and coldness, I am to go on bravely and faithfully reaching out my arms to God.

II. Jeremiah had experienced the saddest and most tragic kind of failure. He had returned to his home at Anathoth to seek from his own priestly family sympathy and encouragement to strengthen him in his trying, disheartening ministry. But his own brethren had raised a hue and cry after him and had driven him away. Not unnaturally he complained to our Lord about such treatment from his own father's house and the answer he received was this: 'If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou charge at the bridles of the coursers?' (Jer. xii: 5). God's meaning was that the prophet must develop through the discipline of failure. He must bear small humiliations and sufferings in a way which would harden his spiritual muscles to meet great trials. If he had found it harder than he could bear to be driven from the city of the priests by a mob made up principally of his own family how would he ever endure to be pursued by the whole city of Jerusalem? And yet this latter was destined to be his fate, if he continued to be the obedient servant of God.

III. Surely our Lord meant that His apostles should prove effective in teaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Yet again and again He subjected them to the discipline of the most humiliating public failures. St. Paul even says: "I think that God hath set forth us the apostles [in the arena] last, as it were appointed unto death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and to men." His thought is that they, Christ's ministers, were being exposed to the mockery of the heathen world, as the poor victims were led forth into the arena to be first subjected to ingenious insults and then slain. I shall not marvel, therefore, if my Lord permits me also to endure the

most mortifying failures, but rather I shall expect that He will preface any considerable achievements He intends shall be mine with some positive fiasco to preserve me from pride.

Friday after the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

The Pure Heart of Blessed Mary. Read Gen. ii: 8-15

I. The Holy Virgin-mother must have been purified from all sin and restored to perfect integrity of nature before she conceived our Lord in her womb. When God created the first Adam He put him into a paradise. But the lot of the Second Adam was cast in wildernesses and mountain passes; He had not "where to lay His Head." Yet His Father did provide Him a paradise in the bosom of His Blessed Mother. For she of whom He would take our human nature was purified from her birth. In our times also He is an Outcast of many, many millions of the people. I will try to make my heart a paradise for Him.

II. Our Saviour foresaw His Cross from the time His Human Mind could contain the idea of it, because He was God, and even in His Human Mind had by reflection all knowledge possible to it under its inevitable human limitations. Thus the Boy Jesus day by day beheld the Passion before Him. But there was one pillow for His little Head during these years of His suffering from His foreknowledge of the Cross, and that was His mother's heart. While people of the world, by their unbelief, and Christians by mortal sin, are subjecting Him ever anew to the insult and anguish of His Passion I resolve to hate sin, for His sake, and always to pray that I may offer Him the resting-place of a heart like Mary's.

III. The Fathers, especially St. Leo the Great, used to compare the baptism of a Christian to the Annunciation of the Blessed Mother. For "unto us a Son is given," in His Godhead, at the moment we are washed clean by the laver of regeneration in a way that is truly analogous to His Incarnation in the Holy Virgin. I will strive to remember that I carry God in my heart as she bore Him safely in her womb.

Saturday after the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Mary's Obedience. Read Num. xxii : 1-21

I. The Blessed Mother set me the example of obedience to God manifesting His will through circumstances, or through any to whom I owe submission. When Herod, steeped in crimes and utterly depraved as he was, would have murdered our Lord, she was forced to rise in the dead of night and hurry away into Egypt, probably the last place on earth where she would have chosen to sojourn. Yet she obeyed without a murmur the Divine Will thus manifested to her. And in the same way, when she and St. Joseph would have taken our Lord back to Bethlehem and were deterred by the evil reputation of Archelaus, again she meekly withdrew to Nazareth. And her obedience was so generously given! For example, we read that she went up to the Passover yearly, although she was not at all required by the Mosaic law to do this.

II. In vivid contrast to her is Balaam, that disloyal prophet of God who forced Him to change his direction again and again, by the reluctance to obey which he, God's servant, displayed. After the Divine Will is clearly shown me let me not whiningly again and

again seek to change a decision for me which I know is certainly dictated by infinite love.

III. Mary is our mother. Indeed this relationship to her follows from the fact that we are brethren of Christ. Now, we must learn from our Mother and Queen the perfect obedience which was her life-long characteristic. Let me remember that her one command to me is: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Glory from Obedience to God's Word.

Read the Epistle for the Day.

I. Although the Decalogue, as it was given to Moses on the Mount, was inscribed on stony tablets, and this by the angels only, yet his reception of it caused him to receive a certain radiance about his face which was so glorious that the Israelites fell back before him. But this glory was transient, and Moses, lest the people should see it fade away and he should in this way lose the reverence it won for him from them, covered his face with a veil. Now St. Paul argues that if the ministration of the letter of the law, which, apart from obedience, killeth, was glorious, though written and engraven in stone, and such as was to be done away, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be far more glorious? As I obey the word of God, the Holy Ghost increases in my soul that righteousness which makes it far more radiantly beautiful before God than was Moses' face in the eyes of his people.

II. And let me never forget that any attempt to improve upon the revelation to me of my Lord's will, is certain to contravene some one of His plans. Once

a leper came to Him, and was cleansed. When he was sent away it was with an even stern injunction not to tell any man of the great favor he had received from his Lord. But he went out, and 'began to herald it much, and to blaze abroad the matter,' perhaps thinking that he would in this way increase Christ's popularity, and so do better for Him than he could do by silence. But what was the result? Jesus could no more preach in the synagogues and public squares of the cities, and was precluded from sleeping under any roof. He had to abide in desert places to escape the vast, hampering multitude who would have prevented both His Ministry and His Passion. No reasonings of human wisdom must be allowed to prevent my exact obedience to my Lord.

III. When obedience costs me most, it is then most precious to Christ. St. John of the Cross, realizing this, once chose to be under a prior who through jealousy would oppress him daily, rather than to be assigned to a superior who loved him and would make his obedience easy. I would imitate this loving spirit when Jesus sends me the opportunity of rendering any trying obedience.

Monday after the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Mary's Generous Love for Christ. Read St. Mark xii: 38-44

I. The Blessed Virgin teaches us an uncalculating devotion to our Lord, which we might fail to learn from His example. For Jesus was always pouring Himself out with utter self-forgetfulness in the service of others. But His mother was as ready to sacrifice herself for Him as He was prone to lose all thought of Himself. Thus in preparation for His Birth she journeyed eighty miles, carrying Him beneath her

heart, in order that he might be born in Bethlehem, as befitted the Messiah. And in the later ministry of our Lord she seems to have entirely given up her home, that she might follow Him through all His journeyings. At the last, it was no doubt because she had no shelter, and no son except the One Who hung then upon the cross, that He gave her to St. John.

II. Now Christ used plainly to show His pleasure in those who were in this way generously devoted to Him. The widow in our passage seems, from the significant context of St. Mark's account, to have been the victim of the scribes' rapacity. Yet she had divided her last "quadrant" into halves, which were the smallest of all coins, intending apparently to give one half to God. But then, moved by her habitual generosity to Him, she cast in both mites, although they were all her living. Jesus wants all my living, too.

III. It is but just that I should give up all for Christ, since "Christ is all" and He gives Himself unstintedly to me. The old Christian tradition is that the Nazarenes when they were in trouble used to seek out the house of the village carpenter, saying, "let us look on the Face of Mary's Son"; for thus they were consoled in any loss or grief. I, like them, can make any sacrifice for Jesus, because I shall always have Him, and He is the Light of the World, and the consolation of the sorrow-stricken and forlorn.

Tuesday after the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Generosity in Spreading the Gospel. Read 2 Cor. viii: 1-5

I. The Blessed Mother, for all the unspeakable devotion she had for Jesus, willingly gave Him up on

the Cross for the salvation of the world. We read of no protests or pleading with Him, although she knew that he could, if He would, come down from the Cross. If we love Christ we shall love our fellow-men also, for His sake.

II. The Macedonian churches afford us an admirable proof of this truth. "The abundance of their joy and their deep poverty," St. Paul wrote of them, "abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Their joy in Christ, he means, and their "poverty down to the depths," or searching detachment from their own property, were the dynamic principles underlying their generosity to him for the extension of Christ's kingdom. And the word for liberality in our passage is significant; for it means literally "single-mindedness." The lesson, therefore, for us Christians is that to have an eye single to the prosperity of Jesus necessarily involves liberal almsgiving for the salvation of souls.

III. The fervent disciples of St. Paul's day willingly suffered the loss of their goods that they might comfort and help the Christian prisoners arrested during one of the Roman persecutions of the Church. "Ye had compassion on them that were in bonds," he wrote to the Hebrews of Asia Minor, "and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods." May I not sometimes emulate their faith and love by giving alms, even at some personal sacrifice, to strengthen the rescue, or prison, work of the Church or some mission struggling with limitations which tie down the blessed Gospel.

Wednesday after the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Business Methods in the Kingdom of Christ.

Read St. Mark xi: 4-16

I. How often in the Gospel our Lord spoke of His "time," saying, for example, "My time is not yet come." He was very exact in His spiritual business, never late for an appointment, and yet never anticipating so that He would act inopportunely. Now, all my time belongs to Him, so that I may not rightfully waste any of it. Remember, my soul, that instant death was decreed against the first parents of the human race, for God said "*in the day* that thou eatest of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt surely die." That sentence was commuted for the sake of the Woman's Seed, Which should bruise the old serpent's head. Since, therefore, our life was mercifully granted us for Jesus' sake, it belongs to Him entirely, and we must "occupy" it for Him with the honesty of the just steward.

II. There is no piety in using unbusinesslike methods of Church work. Our Lord, when He would choose a headquarters, selected Capernaum, because it was a port of entry through which the people from across the lake would pass, and was the point of convergence of the five great Palestinian post-roads. Thus He would have the better opportunity of reaching large numbers of His people, and He could send His apostles or the seventy disciples over the principal highways of His country. And, following His example, we ought to consider effective methods as part of the economy of the Kingdom.

III. Do I try to exercise in my Lord's matters the prudent foresight and planning which I employ about

my temporal affairs? On that Palm Sunday, when late in the afternoon He entered the temple, He looked around about on all things before He retired again to Bethany for the night. He was planning his next day's work. St. Jerome, interpreting the Greek words St. Mark has used, says that it was "as if He sought with a lantern, nothing escaping His Eye." Master, teach me the true foresight which springs from Christian love.

Thursday after the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Mary's Faith at the Cross. Read St. John xix : 25-27 ; xx : 3-8

I. Let us trace to its ultimate source the power which upheld the Blessed Virgin when she stood before the Cross of Jesus. She is often represented as swooning upon the shoulder of St. John, but this is entirely without Scriptural warrant. It is marvelous, however, that she did not faint. Even a Hagar could not bear to see her Ishmael in his last agony (Gen. xxi : 16). How immense, therefore, must have been the fortitude of the Blessed Mother! St. Paul, heroic as he was, knew that he required the power of Christ's Resurrection to uphold him in the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil. iii : 10). It was Mary's sympathy with Christ's purpose of redeeming the world which sustained her, and this in turn rested upon her faith in Him. She alone, it seems, out of our Saviour's disciples, understood, and believed, His repeated prophecies of His Resurrection. She shall be my great teacher of faith in divine mysteries.

II. It is probable that Christ had not faith, because His Human Mind always beheld the Face of His Father, and faith was, in Him, lost in sight. Mary would seem, therefore, to be the greatest teacher of

belief in the ineffable verities of the Catholic Religion. I must strive to store up the teaching I receive and reflect upon it, as she pondered the revelations she received in her holy heart.

III. Is it not significant that it was St. John who, first of the apostles, believed in Jesus' Resurrection? For he had taken the Blessed Virgin "to his own," as his mother. In the dark hours between Good Friday and Easter she must have communicated her own faith to him. May this sweet mother be mine and teach me, in any hour of temptation and doubt, to believe in the Deity of the Risen Christ.

Friday after the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Our Teacher of Worship. Read Acts xvi: 19-26

I. No characteristic of the Lord's Mother comes out more plainly in the Gospels than her spirit of praise. Her Magnificat is the unparalleled hymn of all the Scriptures. And the use she seems to have made of it, to repel fear on her journey up to St. Elizabeth's house, and pride, when her cousin lauded her so highly, suggest to me the value of magnifying the Lord. For thus I shall drive away every kind of spiritual enemy. Even when I am encircled by trials and temptations let me break through by act after act of adoring love for my God. As St. Paul and St. Silas, when they had been scourged with many stripes, cast into prison and fastened in the stocks, still sang praises unto God and so burst open the prison doors and released everyone's bands, so shall I gain glorious freedom if I turn to God when subjected to Satan's persecution. For the arch-enemy does not wish to make me worship, and he will depart from me if he sees that

his temptations have only the result of inciting me to praise my God.

II. The Blessed Mother developed apace during her hidden life with Jesus at Nazareth. In His twelfth year when, after three days search, she found Him in the temple, she addressed Him in terms of gentle reproach (St. Luke ii : 48). But when, at Cana, He required her to abide His own time of action, she submitted to Him with perfect humility (St. John ii : 4 f.). In the same way as she advanced toward perfection through living in the same home with Christ, we in our daily life are to feel that everything we touch is sanctified by His Presence, and that every thought even must be such that it will please the "Master of the House" (St. John xi : 28). My ordinary life must be one long act of worship when I realize that every breath is of the very air of Heaven.

III. The highest act of adoration is included in every devout reception of the Blessed Sacrament. And a good communion is wonderfully typified by Mary kissing Jesus' Lips, upon which grace is poured out (Ps. xlv : 2, A.V. marg.). When I, like her, "kiss the Son" (Ps. ii : 12) let it be with lips as pure and as loving as those of His blessed mother.

Saturday after the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Values of the Cross. Read St. John xii : 27-32

I. By the Cross of our Saviour the prince of this world was cast out. (cp. St. John xvi : 11.) Satan's malice was called forth and disclosed in all its hideous ugliness, in order to disgust Christians with him utterly. And the power of the evil one was broken when the God-man suffered and died on His gibbet,

because by that means He draws all men unto Himself, away from the attractions of the serpent. The grace also which was merited by every slightest pang of this Sufferer Who was God flows down the ages and strengthens souls to resist both the seduction and the violence of the Tempter.

II. How happy is the ancient fault of the prodigal, man! By this he obtained God to be his Saviour. Angels cannot conceive the joy and glory which every new convert possesses of being shod with the Gospel of Peace, clothed with the new robe of righteousness bought for him at the cost of God's human Life, and receiving the signet of sonship to the God of love (St. Luke xv: 22; Eph. vi: 15). The faultless spirits of God's heavenly host "know not Christ as Saviour."

III. Job, in his time of sore trial and suffering, longed for a "daysman," or "umpire," between him and his God,—one who would lay one hand upon God and the other upon him in his utter weakness (ix: 33). In Christ his prayer has been granted, for our Saviour is both divine and human. Our nature is indissolubly, eternally, united to Godhead. Now we cannot be sure that we would have obtained this ineffable favor from God had it not been for our need of the Saviour to Whom suffering would be possible because He would be Man, and Whose every throb of anguish would be the infinitely meritorious suffering of God. I will make this day one long act of love of Jesus in return for the infinite act of charity He made for me on the Cross.

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Charity versus Intellectualism. Read the Gospel for the day.

I. Jesus Himself is the typical Good Samaritan. He became the "Scorn of men and the Outcast of the people." Indeed they asked Him, Are we not right that Thou art a Samaritan? And each one of us, in relation to this Samaritan, is the man who fell among thieves and was wounded half to death. For St. Paul assures us that God has justly included us all among the disobedient and sinners, that He might have mercy upon us all.

II. The lawyer who questioned our Lord, and the priest and Levite of His parable, are types of the intellectually curious people, who are conspicuous in all ages, but are remarkably numerous and prominent in our own. The inquirer really came to Christ simply to ask one of the hard questions which the people of the day were given to discussing: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Our Lord answered by pointing out the simple, obvious answer, which the lawyer himself was perfectly familiar with, in the Scriptures: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.' Salvation, therefore, lies not in dialectics and endless disputings. It requires essentially not a head interested but a heart converted. The priest and the Levite passed the poor sufferer by; he could answer none of their subtle questions. But God's people must follow the example of the Divine Samaritan and love their weaker brethren with the uncalculating charity which He displayed on His Cross. "*This* do," He says to each of us, "and thou shalt live."

III. Count Zinzendorf used to consider that his love for missions, which led him to spend his large fortune

for the conversion of African savages, really began on the day he saw a certain *Ecce Homo.* For it impressd upon him profoundly what contumely and utter anguish God Incarnate had borne when He tasted death for every man. With the Cross before me I cannot help but love my fellow man.

Monday after the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Christ Conquering the Strong Man. Read St. Luke xi: 21-26

I. The "strong man" in Christ's parable is Satan. Before the Incarnation the earth was, in a sense, "his palace," because men had, by their sin, given him a *de facto* control over the world. But when God took our nature, in which are all the elements of the material universe, He received into the closest possible union with Himself that world which He had before been holding, as it were, at Arm's length. 'In the dispensation of the fulness of times He summed up all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth' (Eph. i: 10). One notable result of this was that cases of possession by the devil are now comparatively rare even among heathen people. Our Lord has bound the strong man by His Incarnation (St. Mark iii: 27).

II. But Satan must also be stripped of his armor wherein he trusted, and St. Luke remarks, in the Greek, that he was "armed to the teeth" and incased in a "panoply" of defensive armor. He is divested both of his offensive weapons and of his defensive harness, since our Lord stripped Himself on the Cross and conquered him in mortal strife.

III. The despoiling of our enemy is, however, left to Christ's Mystical Body, the Catholic Church. And

St. Matthew explains that Jesus intends to "spoil his house [thoroughly]." To an extent which only my Lord knows, it will depend upon me whether He is able to carry away the captive souls out of Satan's palace, even now that He has bound him and stripped off his armor.

Tuesday after the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Virtue Flowing from the Cross. Read Psalm cxix: 121-128

I. The Psalmist pleaded to God: "Be surety for Thy servant for good." In the Passion of our Saviour that prayer was answered. For Christ on the Cross pledged Himself, that we might have an unlimited right to draw upon divine grace.

II. "He is not weak to *you-ward*," St. Paul wrote to the Church of his day. God with all His omnipotence was pathetically weak *to Himself* on the cross. He could not come down because He was held fast by bands of love. But toward us He is "mighty to save." The grace which flows out from His death is powerful enough to keep me spotless through the most prolonged temptation and to develop my soul unto a perfection like His Own.

III. From the Heart of Christ, even after He was dead, streamed forth a torrent of life for the world. The water has become a flood of salvation in which countless multitudes of souls have been washed immaculately clean from the deepest stains of mortal sin. The Blood 'in which is the Life,' has ever since been flowing down the ages and entering into weak human souls to cleanse, strengthen and bless them. Above all things, then, let me beware of lapsing from the Sacrament through which the virtue of God's

Passion is conveyed to my soul. I will take to myself that saying of the prophet: "O Lord, all that forsake Thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from Thee shall be written in the earth; because they have forsaken the Lord, the Fountain of living waters" (Jer. xvii: 13).

Wednesday after the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Appeal of the Cross. Read 1 Cor. i: 21-25

I. There was a strange literal fulfilment of the mysterious saying in the one hundred and thirty-second Psalm. There the sacred writer tells us how he had sought "an habitation for the Mighty God of Jacob"; and "Lo," he says, "we *heard* of the same at Ephrata, and *found* it in the wood." Now Ephrata is the same as Bethlehem (Gen. xxxv: 19). The people of our Lord's time, fulfilling this Scripture, desired to find His habitation at Ephrata; they insisted, indeed, that He must issue from the City of David. Perhaps it was our Lord's domicile at Nazareth which made it so difficult for such people as Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea to believe on Him. But they found His habitation in the wood, where He was reigning triumphantly from the Tree. For it must be "the God of Jacob" Who was thus willingly giving Himself up in His spotless innocence to the vilest and most terrible of deaths. Therefore the two who had been only in secret Christ's disciples revealed themselves openly and proudly as His devoted friends when He had been crucified before them, their hearts won to Him by the appeal of His Cross.

II. For it is the weakness of God which is stronger than men. Had the revelation in our Lord been of

God's might, majesty and vengeance upon His enemies, only, we might have been frightened into servility, we could never have been won to loving sonship. But our hearts cannot but yield to the weakness of God, which He displayed in the glorious failure of His Cross.

III. One of the ancient Fathers used to say that the Cross of Christ made him able to bear the greatest mortifications for the sake of his religion. "Other matter for shame, besides the Cross, find I none which can make me shameless in a good sense [*bene impudentem*], and foolish in a happy way [*stultum feliciter*], through my contempt of shame." I can welcome the humiliation of the world's contempt for my childlike faith, when I look up to my God in His Passion.

Thursday after the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Cross Calling Us to Prodigal Love. Read Heb. xiii: 1-6

I. A careful study of the Gospel passages in which our Saviour revealed to the apostles that He would die on the Cross shows that He proclaimed this terrible truth again and again, under carefully chosen conditions which would be favorable to their acceptance of the reproach and shame of the Passion He foretold. In St. Matthew xvii: 22, the Greek words indicate that the second of these declarations of the Cross was made to the apostles in groups on a secret journey through Galilee, undertaken apparently in order to give Him just this opportunity. It was while they "were assembling," after they had been broken up into threes and fours along the road, that Jesus joined

one group after another and pleaded with them to receive the revelation of His coming betrayal and death.

II. I must never allow myself to be discouraged from going on in some path of service to my Lord, or from generous almsgiving to His Church, because the demand upon me has become exacting or has even entailed losses. It was to Christians who had suffered in these very ways that St. Paul was writing in his Epistle to the Hebrews. "Be ye free from covetousness," he urges, "for He hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The words quoted from Joshua i: 5 were addressed to a servant of God who was standing on the edge of the Promised Land, the conquest of which, however, would demand from him the greatest outlay of his resources. When I have journeyed with my Lord faithfully through the wilderness I must not shrink from going on with Him into the Promised Land, even though the path is one marked with crosses.

III. Very delicately St. Paul suggests to us that God 'left' and 'forsook' Jesus in his Passion, that He might never leave nor forsake us. For the word translated "leave" means literally "leave suspended in air," and that for "forsake" suggests the dereliction of our Lord in need of all things and suffering of Body and Soul on Calvary. If, then, I am permitted to share the destitution of my Saviour in some small degree, proportionate to my strength, I can always gain fortitude from the Cross, for by it I know that God is more merciful to me in my failure or loss than He was to the 'Son of His love' (Col. i: 13 *b*).

Friday after the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Cross the Medicine of the World. Read Heb. xii: 1-11

I. There is an old Latin proverb, "*Nulla crux, quanta crux*," that is, "To have no cross, how great a cross!" For the cross of suffering is that "rod and staff" of the Good Sheperd of which David sang. There were enemies of the sheep which infested the mountains,—not only lions, but also serpents which would bite the noses of the sheep. Now, the crook of the shepherd served as a rod to turn his flock from the lair of the wild beasts, and as a staff to scotch the serpents as they stretched themselves out of their holes to strike at the sheep. And as "I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil," for my faithful Shepherd will "smite me friendly" with the rod of suffering and turn me from the pleasure or ease or prosperity where lurks my hidden foe, at the same time that He will never permit me to be attacked unawares.

II. "Our parents," St. Paul points out, "for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them; but He, for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." By this he means that our natural father punished us for our temporal advantage, that we might be successful during these "few days" of our present life; how much more, therefore, ought we gladly to submit to Him Who through the Sacrament of Pain communicates to us a share of His own righteousness to our eternal gain? Continuing, St. Paul urges that, while "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Perhaps he had in mind the striking testimony of Aristotle to

the value of suffering, in which he remarks that "The root is bitter but the fruit is sweet."

III. There is a phrase which St. Paul uses only in the epistles written during the last two years of his captivity. It is the expression, "This is a faithful saying," with which he introduces a number of statements of Christian doctrine in the epistles to St. Timothy and St. Titus. In prison, facing death, it had come home to him with new force that the word of God is faithful. Only when I have tasted His sympathy in my suffering shall I have that deepest trust in Him.

Saturday after the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Silence on the Cross. Read Psalm xxxix.

I. From the study of the Passion it appears that the first three of the seven words from the Cross were spoken at the beginning of the crucifixion and the remaining four at the end. For almost three hours Jesus was silent. Now, we read of a half hour of silence in Heaven, as the climax of a long series of divine judgments on the wicked world (Rev. viii: 1). But how must the holy host of Heaven have hung upon the mute Lips of the God-man during these three hours when He was planning blessings for all ages of men!

II. In silence, we protect and nourish the tiny flame of divine charity in our hearts. Thus David put a bridle upon his mouth until his heart became hot within him and the sacred fire was kindled. Then he spake, but it was to pray for a holy death. Now he had come to understand that "man walketh in a vain show," or, literally, "as a painted image." Christians

who learn to find opportunities of silence from the idle talk of men come to appreciate the importance of an interior life filled with the love of God.

III. In the dramatic language of the Psalmist, the ungodly cry: "We are they that ought to speak: who is lord over us?" (Ps. xii: 4). But God's people have times when they commune with their own hearts in their chamber, and are still (Ps. iv: 4). Shall not I from time to time mortify my self-love by the Christian discipline of restraint of speech? I will practice refraining my too-ready tongue even from lawful words, in honor of my Saviour's silence on the Cross.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Spiritual versus Carnal Life. Read 2 Cor. vi: 1-10

I. In the midst of a long list of sufferings, virtues and good works, which is really an outline of the ministry of the apostles, St. Paul declares that such a life as theirs is to be lived only "by the Holy Ghost." For He is the very Center of the spiritual life. He must be our indwelling Guide and Comforter at all times. He is the Voice of the Good Shepherd speaking through our consciences, and Jesus trusted that we would hear His Voice and follow Him. As the shepherds on the Palestinian hills have for ages been used to call their flocks by crying, "Good pasture! Good pasture!" so the Holy Ghost will always be moving me to prayer, meditation, and communion, that my soul may feed upon the Plant of Renown and drink the flowing "waters of comfort."

II. St. Paul's tears were not easily drawn from him. Neither his imprisonment nor his acute physical anguish could make him weep. But he says that

even to speak of those who "mind earthly things," and so are become "enemies of the Cross of Christ," made him cry. Their god, he says, is their belly, and they glory in their shame. How despicable, and at the same time foolish, is the carnal life! Do I care more for any pleasure, or for temporal prosperity, than I do for my prayers and my communions?

III. It is a good test to determine whether or not I love earthly things inordinately, if I will sometimes imagine myself suddenly caught up into Heaven. What would I find to do there? Would I be interested and pleased? Those around me, from the greatest saints to the latest soul admitted there, would be engaged in intercession. Would I soon grow weary of pleading for one after another of the endless list? Has my devotional life fitted me to derive perfect happiness from the worship of the "Lamb as It had been slain"? If not, then I need more help from the Blessed Paraclete, that I may become heavenly-minded.

Monday after the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Making Friends by Use of the Mammon. Read St. Luke xvi: 1-9

I. The unjust steward in our Lord's parable was accused of wasting the profits which had come in from his master's farm, and he was ordered to produce his books for inspection. Knowing that he was guilty he bethought him how he might escape from his lord's just condemnation and at the same time provide himself with friends who would receive him in case the owner was not satisfied, after all, and he lost his position. Thereupon he called every one of his lord's debtors, and handing them the notes which they had

given as evidence of the amount they owed, he bade them destroy the paper and write instead notes showing a considerably smaller obligation to the proprietor. He accomplished two ends by this means: first, the amount for which his books showed that he as steward was responsible to his master was decreased to the amount which his store-houses would actually contain when the accounting was demanded of him. In fact, the proprietor actually commended him as one who, on examination, proved to have administered the farm wisely. The sub-lessees also were won over by his generosity to them. Moreover, all this was accomplished by the manipulation of "mammon," or "money-values." "And I say unto you," Christ concluded, "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," that is, "of money which may so readily be used for unrighteousness," "that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." By the use we make of our property now, we may win God and His blessed saints and angels to be our friends, so that when we die they will receive us into the eternal mansions of our Heavenly Father.

II Our Lord directs the children of light to learn from this wise child of the present generation. What, then, were his business principles? (a) He faced his situation fairly and frankly; (b) He lost no time in acting; (c) He collected all his forces, and spared no expedient to provide for himself.

III. I must use divine grace in my spiritual business as earnestly and wisely as this clever rascal used his natural endowment. I must "occupy," or "trade with," the talent of grace which He entrusts to me. To invest our spiritual capital in good works is to increase it. But if we have inspirations and graces and do not use them we are like the farmer who feeds

upon his seed-corn or the business man who lives on his capital.

Tuesday after the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

All Good in Us Due to Grace. Read Heb. xii: 25-29

I. The beginning of our spiritual life is at Baptism, when, among many other great gifts of God, sanctifying grace is infused into the soul. The early Christians, at the administration of this initial sacrament, used to sing Psalm xlii: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." Often the candidate knew that his life would pay the penalty of his receiving Christian Baptism, but his soul thirsted, with such famished desire, to receive the Blessed Trinity and divine grace, that he was utterly careless about the loss of all that he would naturally have grasped and held. On the anniversaries of my baptism, do I remember with joy and gratitude what God did for me on that day?

II. Our progress in spirituality depends upon our continuing to receive sacramental grace. The Wise Man says in his pointed way, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Even the Son of God declared as to the powers of His Manhood, "I can of Mine Own Self do nothing." As Christ followed His pilgrim people through the wilderness and gave them water from the smitten rock, which in some mysterious way was identified with Himself (1 Cor. x: 4), so must I receive again and again the stream of life from the smitten Side of my Lord.

III. The glorious consummation of our soul's salvation will be through divine grace. We are even now receiving a kingdom which may not be moved

at the Second Advent. But let us have grace, for when our God comes to judge us it will be as a consuming fire. That terrible flame will never kindle in souls which have retained in them the precious living water of sanctifying grace. I resolve to make careful provision that the last sacraments shall be brought to me when I am approaching my death.

Wednesday after the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Christ's Heavenly Priesthood. Read Heb. ix: 11-16

I. St. Paul draws an analogy between the sacrifice of Christ and the will of a testator. For then, as now, the "testament" of the deceased must be probated or proved before the proper magistrate before it would take effect as an instrument conveying property. 'Where a testament is,' the Apostle argues, 'there must also of necessity be presented the death of the testator.' In a precisely similar way, is his thought, it is necessary that Jesus should present His death before the throne of His Father, in order that it may bring to us the manifold gifts which He bequeathed to us from His deathbed on the Cross.

II. Below, the Apostle teaches us that this re-presentation of Calvary is perpetually made by our Lord in Heaven. 'This Man,' he writes (x: 12), "after He had offered one sacrifice for sins *continually*, sat down on the Right Hand of God." The meaning of this compact statement is that the sacrifice accomplished on the first Good Friday was to be *continually offered* in Heaven. I must often think of my Lord as every moment pleading before God the Father His mighty work of love for my soul.

III. In this same wonderful treatise on our Saviour's heavenly priesthood, St. Paul tells us to think of Jesus as offering His blessed sacrifice on His altar-throne at *any instant* when we stand in special need. 'Christ is entered into Heaven itself,' he declares, '*now* to appear in the presence of God for us' (ix : 24). His intercession, with all the power of His Passion behind it, is, therefore, as immediate as my need.

Thursday after the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Giving Glory to God. Read Gen. i : 24-28

I. Every language but the Hebrew of Genesis uses a word for "man" which represents his spiritual exaltation. Thus the Sanscrit "manu" means "to think." The "anthropos" of the Greek is "one who looks upward." Even the inferior languages like Lapp exemplify this truth. But in Genesis "Adam" means "the one of earth." Having recognized the humble origin of our body, however, Moses at once goes on to reveal that God created Adam in His Own Image and Likeness. "Man," says Delitzsch, "is the heart of the universe, being compounded of both worlds, and so their point of contact." We are earth; we are also "the image and Glory of God" (1 Cor. 11-7). It is our part, therefore, to offer nature's praise of our Creator as only spiritual beings can.

II. Let me learn to offer thanksgiving for all that my Heavenly Father sends me. "What reward shall I give unto the Lord," sings the Palmist, "for all the benefits that He hath done unto me? I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving." Do I give glory to God for such a blessing as my work? Before the Fall He put

Adam into the Garden to dress it and keep it, for work was necessary to his happiness. God is surely blessed beyond all that we can think, yet He is perpetually at work. For our Lord said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." I will, therefore, praise Him for giving me, a poor fallen creature, a share in His Own activity.

III. In the midst of daily duties, I will frequently lift up my heart and give glory to my God. Jerusalem, which is above, is free and unspeakably happy in its worship of the Holy Trinity, yet the blessed rest not day nor night from God's perfect service. Now this City of God is "the mother of us all." It must suggest to me to display in my "commonplace" tasks that heavenly cheerfulness which glorifies my Heavenly Father.

Friday after the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Unselfish Devotion of Angels. Read Job xxxviii: 1-7

I. The holy angels, true "sons of God," shouted for joy at the creation of the world and man. Yet, it would seem that they knew that this meant the advancement of those who were by origin their inferiors. For God seems to have revealed to them that He would make our race, and afterward take our nature, that He might carry us home to Heaven with Him in His human Arms. He would take upon Him, not the nature of angels, but of a creature ranking lower in the universe than they. Yet these glorious spirits loved us for God's sake.

II. At the birth of each new individual of our fallen race, an angel is appointed to be his guardian and helper. Thus our Lord spoke of the angels of little children who appear before the Face of their

Heavenly Father to denounce any who should cause the little ones to stumble (St. Matt. xviii: 10). All through life this faithful attendant waits upon the human soul and at last, if it is saved, bears it into "Abraham's Bosom." Yet our sins are unspeakably offensive to our holy guardian. How unselfish, therefore, is his attendance upon me, for God's sake! He displays more charity than I would if I became body-servant to some repulsive member of an inferior race, that I might gain his soul to the greater glory of my Lord.

III. In vivid contrast to the rebellion of Lucifer, which seems to have been occasioned by the revelation to him of God's intention to become incarnate, is the devotion of the holy angels to the Son of Man. We find them ministering to Him at times when His Humanity was sharing in our infirmities,—for example, after the forty days of temptation and fasting, and in Gethsemane. And their rejoicing in the triumph of His Manhood at His Resurrection and Ascension is equally striking. How completely were they without jealousy of the race thus ineffably exalted through its indissoluble union with God! Let me, after their example, lose all sensitiveness about my own prerogatives in my absorbing zeal that the will of God shall be done.

Saturday after the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

How We Shall Sing the Lord's Song. Read Psalm cxxxvii.

I. "We wept," writes the exiled Psalmist, "when we remembered Thee, O Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange Land?" Babylon was in a broad plain, watered by four rivers and numerous

canals. It was so utterly foreign to all the lifelong associations of a people accustomed to the Holy City, for Jerusalem was seated on her mountains, and had no stream but softly flowing Shiloah. How, then, should they sing Jehovah's praises among these outlandish surroundings? Yet the book of Ezekiel was written by the river Chebar, and Daniel saw his visions on the banks of the canal Ulai, and many of the most beautiful psalms were written during the captivity. Now, I too am an exile from the Lord while I am at home in the body. I, also, am tempted to hang my harp on the weeping willows because I fall so far short of that union with Jesus which I long after in my better moments. But I will believe that the voice of my prayer will be all the sweeter in my Lord's ears because I have forced my devotion out of a heart half crushed by its failures.

II. The discipline which we receive through our trials and sufferings ought to help us greatly in singing the Lord's song. The taskmasters 'that made us wail,' the sacred writer complains, 'required of us mirth,' saying: "Sing us some of the songs of Zion." Yet this chastisement appears from the event to have been a needed stimulus, for when it ceased many Jews settled down supinely to the paganism of Babylon.

III. To love Jesus with incomparable devotion helps us sing His song with sweetness and power. "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," is the Psalmist's pious imprecation, "if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." The same year that Babylon was destroyed, the temple was built, for the fall of the city caused many Jews to go forth and help with this great work of devotion to Jehovah. How beautiful and how lofty will be my worship of my

Lord when I can say to Him: "O my God, I have no good beyond Thee."

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

Seeking God Above All. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. The Sixty-third Psalm, which, according to tradition, was written "when David was in the wilderness of Judah," fleeing from Saul, teaches us to thirst for God with body and soul. "In a barren and dry land" where was no water, this "man after God's Own Heart" forgot the claims of his famishing flesh in his desire for Jehovah. Do I, like the Royal Psalmist, 'love God above all *things*'?

II. In Adam's creation, our Heavenly Father bestowed upon him strength and wisdom that he might gain pleasure, wealth and honor. He withheld but the one gift of *peace*. For He reasoned,—

> "Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
> If goodness lead him not, yet weariness,
> May toss him to my breast."

My life will never be in any true sense a success, therefore, until I can say to my God, "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." (Ps. lxxiii: 25.)

III. Even before my enjoyment of home and its comforts, and above my love of those nearest and dearest to me, must be my love of God. Our Lord, in His Boyhood, let His mother and St. Joseph go away without Him, while He remained for three days in Jerusalem, begging His food about the streets, it is said, and sleeping in stables with the cattle. Why? Just that He might 'be about His Father's business,' or, as it may be translated, 'in His Father's House.'

Such calls of God as those to the priesthood, the Religious Life, and missions are paramount to every natural human claim. Let me this day renew my absolute self-consecration.

Monday after the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

Seeking God's Honor above all. Read St. John vi : 25-29

I. Very solemnly our Lord rebuked the Jewish multitude because they sought Him for the natural satisfaction they derived from being in His fellowship. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," were His words, "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." And if we seek Christ in His Church and His Holy Service mainly for the enjoyment we derive from the music, the ritual, or the sermon, we also come to Him for the loaves and fishes. We desire, not that our Lord's great power and love in the Eucharist should be honored, but that our senses should be gratified.

II. Our Saviour left us also a warning against over-regard for our fellow-creatures. "Call no man your father upon the earth," He commanded, "for one is your Father, Which is in Heaven" (St. Matt. xxiii : 9). Our respect and love must never stop with any mere man, as if he were the originating source of his own goodness. We must glorify God for whatever perfection we see in His creatures. This principle will save us from foolish adulation of our religious leaders and guides.

III. It will help me to learn the principle of honoring God above all creatures, if I take special care about those hidden actions, like my prayers, which only His Eye beholds. When a certain sculptor was asked why he spent so much time and pains on the part

of his statue which would be against the wall, so that 'no one would see it,' he answered finely: "*God* will see it." I will try, when I am alone to-day, to act so that I shall glorify my Lord God.

Tuesday after the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

Loving God more than Our own Salvation.

Read St. John xii: 23-28

I. It is a poor sort of Christianity which values God only as a means to save one's soul. Such a religion makes men seek to get off with a minimum of devotion and service. But the evangelical principle is: "He that loseth his soul for My sake shall find it" (St. Matt. x: 39, R.V.marg.). And our Lord must have repeated this saying many times until He impressed it upon the apostles as a fundamental canon of the Church's life, since it is one of a very few passages occurring in all four Gospels. I must, therefore, love God for Himself more than I love my own soul, so that I forget even my salvation in my all-absorbing devotion to Him.

II. Our Lord Himself sets the great example of obedience to this precept of His that we must care for God Himself more than for our own safety. Immediately before the day of His crucifixion, the temptation came to Him to save Himself at the expense of His Father's glory. "Now is My Soul troubled," He exclaimed to His apostles, "and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour?" But at once He cried out, "Father, glorify Thy Name" (St. John xii: 27, R.V. marg.). Then, with entire willingness, He went forward to meet His Cross. May God give me a self-forgetful love for Him like this.

III. In New England villages of three generations ago lived numbers of people who were self-sacrificing, unselfish, devoted servants of God, yet who, under the error of Calvinism, believed they were predestinated to be lost forever. Ought not I, then, a Catholic, knowing that God's Essence is infinite Love, seek an entire, disinterested, devotion to my Heavenly Father?

Wednesday after the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

Christ's Love for Each One. Read 2 Kings iii: 21-29

I. Our Saviour has the tenderest terms for us: "children," and "little ones," He calls us. And He is our "Eternal Father," by virtue of that Manhood out of which our new life issued when we were begotten in Baptism. Now a parent knows and prizes every mark of the child's individuality. And indeed the very hairs of our heads are all numbered by our Father's love, for it is infinitely discerning.

II. We can see His love for even the most obscure of us reflected in His gratitude to anyone who bestows a benefit upon us. He who gives but a cup of cold water to a disciple shall surely receive his reward. A good deed done for the least of Jesus' brethren is done for Him, Himself. To receive a little child in His Name is to receive Him. Truly, He loves His neighbor as Himself,—and more than His Own life, since He bartered Himself on the Cross "for every man" (Heb. ii: 9).

III. The Moabite king in our passage had one last desperate resource to gain peace from the allied forces besieging him. He sacrificed on the ramparts his eldest son, the heir to his throne. And in a strange,

and utterly unexpected, way this terrible expedient succeeded. For Israel's confederates were seized with wrath against them because their implacable anger had caused this young prince's untimely, pathetic death. Thereupon division was created among the allies, and Israel retreated and raised the siege. How much more ought the sight of Jesus' sacrifice of Himself make me repudiate the sins which nailed Him to the Cross! With what indignation against my rebellious self shall I now cease to war against Him Who "loved me and gave Himself for me"!

Thursday after the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

How God Draws Us to Himself. Read Ps. xxvii.

I. "One thing," declares the Psalmist, "have I desired of the Lord, which I will require; even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to visit His temple." God's loveliness, therefore, is one principal way in which He attracts my soul. Artists and men of letters give their whole lives to the cultivation of the beautiful. Men sell their very souls for a beautiful human form. Yet these creatures are all but the faintest adumbrations of the loveliness of God, Whose likeness they bear. I will seek to Him Who is the Source of all that is attractive in the universe.

II. God's beneficence, also, draws me to Him. I learn to love Him for His prodigal mercy to me. He *poureth* His benefits upon us (Ps. lxviii : 19). Our Lord *poured* out His Soul unto death (Isa. liii : 12). God *poured* out His Spirit upon the Church (Ezek. xxxix : 29). As I think of his unstinted blessings, I long to give myself unreservedly to Him.

III. His love, moreover, appeals to me for mine. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 St. John iv : 19). He draws us with bands of love and makes us run after Him. The prevenient grace, the invitation, often indeed the pleading insistence, come from Him. "When Thou saidst, Seek ye My Face, my heart said unto Thee : Thy Face, Lord, will I seek." To-day, my soul, our God shall draw thee a long way nearer to Himself.

Friday after the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

Taking Jesus' Side. Read St. Luke xvi : 19-31

I. My religion will be either such as will bear attack and pressure or it will be mere empty sham like the hollow instrument which produces sound and nothing more. Is there not still a measure of sonorous vacuity about my Christianity? Does the Scripture really move me, or have some of its sacred counsels become platitudes because I am not following them and so gaining an increasing insight into their meaning? Remember, my soul, how our Lord said that unless we will hear the Scriptures, we would not believe, though One risen from the dead should come in Person to teach us. If we are not fully committed to Christ's Side with our present spiritual privileges, we would not be if we had visions and private revelations.

II. We must show ourselves practical disciples of Christ by avoiding bad company. Between those who would draw us away from God, and ourselves, there is a great gulf fixed. No matter what the position, wealth or elegance of Dives may be; regardless of whether human laws or man's esteem sanction his

way of life, our place is on Jesus' side of the great gulf. Abraham was full of divine charity, yet he declared the chasm impassable. So it must be for us, since we are children of the kingdom and of the light, and these by their flagrant, unrepented mortal sin are already living in Hell.

III. The Psalmist conceived that there are two ways in which we are to be on our Lord's Side. One is by keeping Him at our right hand, so that we shall not be moved by any assault upon us. The other is that which obtains in Heaven, where we shall be at His Right Hand and find there "pleasures for evermore" (Ps. xvi: 8, 11).

Saturday after the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Two Cords. Read Eccles. xii: 1-7

I. The Holy Spirit has for His mission in the world to shed abroad the infinite love of the Blessed Trinity in men's hearts. Thus our Lord prayed to His Father for the Church: "that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them"; that is, that the Holy Ghost, the Love of the Father for the Son, should dwell in us. Proceeding from Both and being the Love of Each for the Other, He would make us recipients of even infinite divine charity.

II. Our response to this love of the Holy Trinity is the bond, indefectible in itself, between our souls and the eternal realities. It is the mysterious threefold cord which the Blessed Spirit inspired the Preacher to say "is not quickly broken" (Eccles. iv: 12). Once its three strands are strongly plaited, even the most prolonged efforts of Satan to break it by mortal sin ought never to be successful.

III. In vivid contrast to this cord is that silver one which represents human life. The sacred writer has drawn us a wonderful allegorical picture of old age, "the day when the keepers of the house [the arms] shall tremble, and the strong men [the legs] shall bow themselves, and the grinders [the teeth] cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows [the eyes] be darkened." He then speaks of death as coming when 'the silver cord is loosened and the golden bowl is broken.' For the translucent lamp of that day was filled with golden olive-oil and suspended from the ceiling by a fine silver rope. The breaking of this cord would bring the fragile bowl crashing down upon the stone floor and spill the oil. So shall it be with the frail vessel of our body when our tenuous hold on life is loosened; it shall spill out the golden oil of life. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease,"—but "charity never faileth."

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Touch of Christ. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. Christ's touch laid on the bier which bore the still body of the widow's son raised him to new life. But has not my Saviour laid upon me the "Finger of God," the Holy Spirit (cp. St. Matt. xii: 28 and St. Luke xi: 20)? And did not His touch bring me the new life of grace, when I was 'born again of water and the Holy Ghost'? Or when I had slain my soul by mortal sin, did not the touch of absolution come from Jesus through the priest bestowing upon me fresh life? It is He, Himself, Who met me when I was dead in tresspasses and sins and by His life-giving Spirit delivered me to my mother, the Church.

II. Surely He continued to help this young man spiritually, after miraculously resuscitating his body. And He it is Who through His Spirit makes me will and do the righteous acts whereby I work out my salvation. As the Jews, at the end of their captivity streamed forth from Babylon fairly running across the desert to their fatherland, and then settled down to the heart-breaking labor of actually rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple, so my conversion is only the initial step in the long, often discouraging, work of character-building. But I have this supreme reason for fortitude, just as the Jews had: the Hand of the Divine Master-Builder is laid to the work. It is to be done, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech iv: 6).

III. Our Lord compares us to fish taken in the net of that Kingdom of God in the world which is the Catholic Church. It is His touch upon the ropes as He pulls me in to His Right Hand on the eternal shore, which I feel in my conscience when some moral choice is to be made. What love I ought to have for that touch of my Lord's Finger! What obedience I should render it! All this day I will be more docile to the guidance of my Saviour.

Monday after the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Satan's Touch. Read Gen. iv: 9-13

I. The devil's characteristic course of seduction is by leading a soul first into presumption, and then, after the transgression has been committed, into despair. So it was with Cain. In spite of God's warning that sin was crouching like a wild beast at his door, thirsting for his destruction, he went blindly on

in the way of his fatal anger. Satan whispered that he would not be punished for his crime, since he was not 'his brother's keeper,' that is, not to be held responsible for his safety. But when the evil thing was done, then the arch-enemy led him to give up hope. "My punishment," he said to our Lord, "is greater than I can bear," or, as the Hebrew more probably means, "My iniquity is too great to be forgiven." Thereupon he gave himself up entirely to Satan's direction, it seems from the fact that he became the progenitor of the apostate line.

II. Let me conceive a deep hatred of Satan's touch which, if it is allowed, becomes the occasion of mortal sin. St. Jude (*v.* 12) compares souls which have yielded to him to those trees which have given up their fruit and also have become blasted. "These are . . . . trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit," he writes; or, to paraphrase his words, "they are trees of late autumn, when the fruit is past," "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." A soul in mortal sin, therefore, has lost all its store of graces and merits, and is again as dead as it was before its baptism.

III. But St. Paul reveals to us an even more dreadful truth about it. The Hebrews, he urged, were to look "diligently lest any man fall back from the grace of God, lest any root of," that is, "producing," "bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled" (xii: 15). The fallen soul, so long as it continues averted from God becomes a source of scandal and deadly injury to all around. What a motive I have in this truth to make me hold fast by God my Saviour and in every issue yield to His guiding touch!

Tuesday after the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Besetting Sin. Read 1 Thess. iii: 1-5

I. Our favorite weakness is something more than Satan's touch; it is his grasp upon our souls by which he makes us sin against God, at least venially, almost at his pleasure. It is true that I cannot help having this predominant temptation. But its purpose is to give me the opportunity of glorifying God and bettering my own soul, by resisting the sinful impulse. When St. Paul speaks of the 'tempter tempting' us, he uses a Greek word with two principal meanings, "test" and "experience." Thus he indicates that Satan even by his worst attack cannot do more than prove our faithfulness to Jesus and make us veterans in frustrating his own devices.

II. We are prone to be very reluctant really to crush our besetting sin. Let us discern its true nature that we may deal with it unflinchingly. It is "death come up into our windows" (Jer. ix: 21), the form in which the deadly principle of concupiscence makes its most potent appeal. There is a spider, said to be the only one in America, the bite of which is necessariiy fatal. Yet it is a tiny thing, easily overlooked. Evil is like this poisonous creature and my chief temptation is the spot in my soul where I am susceptible to its fatal sting.

III. The shameful surrender which may be our reaction to Satan's most insidious assault is indicated to us in our passage. St. Paul is urging the Thessalonians not to give up their faith because of the humiliating afflictions to which Christ's apostle was being subjected (*v.* 3). Now the word which he uses for "moved" means primarily for an animal "to wag the tail," then, "to fawn" and finally "to give way." This

is just the process of our yielding to our besetting sin. The opposite reaction upon it appears in the Twenty-third Psalm, where we say of the Good Shepherd: "He maketh me to lie down," or "crouch like a lion," "in green pastures," of grace. I will go out from my communions and prayers full of energy that I may be a worthy follower of the 'Lion of the Tribe of Judah.'

Wednesday after the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Difficult Obedience to Christ's Touch. Read Isa. 1: 5-11

I. When the Royal prophet declares that after God had opened his ear he was not rebellious nor turned away, but gave his back to the smiters and his "cheeks to them that plucked off the hair" and spat upon him, he is relating his own experiences in the court of Manasseh. Evidently he was given the hard obedience of preaching against the corruption of king and courtiers, although his witness to Jehovah and righteousness brought him naught but cruel insolence. And it was through his hearkening to the voice of his Divine Master that he became a type of the Crucified so wonderfully like the Anti-type that we always think of His words as if they had been spoken by Jesus Himself.

II. Like Isaiah, the great Apostle of the Gentiles was "crucified with Christ." And it is not alone for saintly prophet and apostle to render obedience to God when it costs much. 'Be ye imitators of me,' St. Paul urges us, 'as I am of Christ.' "Brethren," again he says, "I beseech you, be as I am."

III. The children of the world are ruled by their bodily desires or their pride of intellect. Christians

live under the dominance of their wills, submitted to perfect Wisdom and Love. We are to govern our natural self, as that truly brave French king, Henry of Navarre, forced himself, albeit trembling from head to foot, into the forefront of the battle. "Shake, old body," he is reported to have soliloquized, "if you knew where I am going to take you to-day, you would shake worse than that." May God give me grace to do my duty as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, whenever I hear the word of command from His Lips.

Thursday after the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Loving Obedience Essential. Read St. Matt. xxi: 28-32

I. It is not speaking God fair but obeying Him which constitutes real Christianity. We Church-people are, rightly, careful to secure decency and order in our worship. But our religion does not *consist* in a beautiful rendering of the sacred liturgy. "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," was our Lord's solemn warning, "but he that doeth the will of My Father Which is in Heaven." And the Church has been careful to have this saying included among the offertory sentences in the Eucharist.

II. When the angel of the Lord proclaimed to the shepherds that there was born unto them that day in the City of David a Saviour, immediately a multitude of the heavenly host, unable to restrain themselves longer, burst forth into the praise of God, saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.' Thus the Advent of our Lord, and indeed the whole blessed economy of our salvation, is

meant to bring peace to the obedient servants of Christ. But if we would claim the full measure of blessing which our Lord seeks to convey to us, we must be no legalists, but children of God led by His free Spirit. Thus the Holy Ghost has taught us to testify in the recitation of the Psalter, "Great is the peace of them that *love* Thy law, and they are not offended at it."

III. The greatest incentive to loving obedience we can have is the fact that by hearkening to our Father's behest we enable Him to ask yet more of us. An older Religious once said of a younger, "I am always glad of a chance to ask him to do something for me; I feel as if it were I who had done him a favor." Shall I not make my Heavenly Father rejoice in this same way whenever He lays any sterner duty upon me? I can give Almighty God a free hand with me by maintaining a loving will.

Friday after the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Our Life in the Kingdom. Read Psalm lxxxv

I. In all God's infinite realm, only men and devils ever defy His Will. If, therefore, I remember that I belong to that Kingdom of Heaven wherein are His Own children, I shall try to live always according to my lofty rank in the universe. St. Paul cannot say enough of this royal caste to which we have attained in our Lord. 'God,' he declares, 'hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus' (Eph. ii: 5-6). St. Chrysostom, commenting on this passage, argues that "since the Head sitteth, the Body sitteth also, and 'ye are the Body of Christ.'" Thus the blessed saints of God leave me no alterna-

tive but to strive after that same magnanimous devotion of my will to God which He displayed Who was "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."

II. The dear Apostle of Love, in his turn, reminds us that "our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ" (1 St. John i: 3). And his thought will help me particularly in my prayers. If I look upon the enthroned Christ as my Fellow, as well as my God, I shall be able to 'lift up my heart upon my hands' in my supplications (Lam. iii: 41). For I shall realize how near I am to Christ. "Standing on the earth," St. Austin boldly declares, "thou art in Heaven. The body, to be uplifted, must change its place, but the heart its affections."

III. In the Blessed Sacrament I have offered to me the closest and most familiar friendship with my Saviour, if only I bring a true heart, at peace with God and man. For there, "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other; truth springeth out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from Heaven." Let me try to make my heart a little Heaven in honor of Christ Who comes to live in me at each communion.

Saturday after the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Thy Kingdom Come. Read Jer. xiii: 1-11

I. In the Lord's Prayer, we are continually pleading with God to send His Kingdom. But we are not to think of this petition as one which is not to be answered until the second Advent. We should possess the Kingdom, even now, in our own household; and as we become more and more receptive of it, it

will certainly come with ever increasing abundance of its blessings. Our meditation, to consider that alone, brings us the Kingdom. For 'this is eternal life,' our Lord said, 'to know Thee the one true God and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.'

II. If only I recollect my Saviour's Presence, I shall never feel alone, no matter how black the night nor how fearful the danger. It is said that Columbus, standing on the bridge of his flagship, in the darkness which preceded the dawn of that day when he saw the first signs of land, was overheard praying. "I will cling fast to Thee, O God," were his pathetic words, "though the waves buffet me. Thee, Thee, at least I know." Let me also take courage in my moments of depression and discouragement. I will say to my Jesus, "Rejoice the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee, Lord, do I lift up my soul."

III. All the discipline of temptation, penances and affliction becomes sweet to me if I realize that it is the way whereby my Lord is purifying me for closer union with Himself. And how unspeakably close would He draw me! "As the girdle cleaveth unto the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto Me the whole House of Israel, ... saith the Lord." How much more does he wrap around Him the "Israel of God," the Catholic Church, and each of its members!

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Christ Exalting Us by Conversions.

Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. Our honest Mother Church encourages us in no Pharisaic complacency. She teaches us plainly in the Prayer of Humble Access that we are lower than

the Syro-Phœnician woman. For she was ranked with the pet dogs who waited for broken food beneath the children's table. We, in contrast to her, "are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under [God's] table." Let not my pride lead me to take offence at this frank estimate of my low estate. For the possession of certain natural virtues does not make me righteous in God's eyes. Do not sinners love those who love them, and do good to those who do good to them? Mere devotion to my family, and justice in business transactions, will not supply the place of supernatural faith, hope, and love.

II. The Scriptures compare our race in its present condition to a mountainous country. For the mountains are the mark, and the result, of a great upheaval in the past. So, also, the colossal wickedness of men is to be referred ultimately to a cataclysmic disaster in the dawn of human history. The work of preparation for Christ, accordingly, is to be done by filling every valley of pusillanimity and levelling every mountain and hill of pride, while at the same time our crooked ways are made straight and our rough ways smooth. When this is done, "all flesh shall see the salvation of our God" wrought out in us.

III. One essential principle which we must follow, if we would make each conversion to higher things irrevocable, is that we should hasten to act upon any resolution for spiritual betterment we have been led to form. We must *commit* ourselves, Professor William James counsels us, and that publicly if possible, by taking some step pursuant to our new purpose. What steady progress I shall make, if one enterprise for Christ after another effects its permanent exaltation of my spiritual life!

Monday after the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Marks of the Christian Vocation. Read Ezek. xxviii: 1-10

I. The Prisoner of the Lord prayed that we would walk worthy of our vocation which is marked by lowliness, meekness and long-suffering forbearance. And, in asking this of us, he, as a good father, is counselling the course by which our souls can make the greatest and most rapid progress in spirituality. For the lowest room was the special choice of the Crucified, and God hath highly exalted Him; therefore, we, by taking that same place, are in the line of the highest promotion. Let us remember that while we shall all rise as Christ did, only those who are like Christ shall ascend with him beyond the stars. Many souls there are, which in the false way of human arrogance, claim to be gods, to sit in the seat of God, and set their heart as His Heart. Like Tyre, they think of themselves as enthroned in the midst of the seas, and like that proud city, also, they shall die the death of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. But before me lies the true and Christian way to be a god and to sit with my Saviour on His throne, and have a heart like the Heart of God. It is the plain path worn by the Feet of the meek and lowly Jesus.

II. It will help me to be patient with stupid, or irritating, or wilful people, if I remember with what long-suffering patience Christ is struggling with billions of human hearts, the best of which is more offensive to Him, because of its sins, than the most disagreeable of all my acquaintances is to me. If this consideration does not calm me, when perhaps I am inflamed with the sense of great injury done me, then let me reflect upon the Cross, where God tasted death

for *every* man. A Buddist, on being shown a crucifix, said: "Ah! Now I understand why you Christians believe that Christ is God. I have always thought it a noble thing to be kind to my enemies. But to die a slave's death for them,—it wanted more than a man to do that!" I am nearest the Divine when I pray lovingly for those who have done me wrong.

III. There is no better test of my Christianity than the way I take a humiliation. F. D. Maurice, upon failing to receive an appointment to a professorship in Oxford, said: "They wanted a scholar and a gentleman, and I am neither." When I can take mortifications in such a spirit as that, I shall be fine enough to exercise leadership in some sphere of family or business or Church life.

Tuesday after the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

St. Stephen's Long Suffering. Read Acts vi: 5-15

I. It is a striking fact which becomes apparent as we study St. Stephen's life, that his effectiveness would have been comparatively small if it had depended solely upon his active and brilliant ministry. It is probable that Saul had been one of those Cilician Hellenists against whom St. Stephen had disputed so successfully, and the result was that the defeated disputant was filled with such malevolence against the Christian orator that he assumed the duty of having charge of the clothes of those who stoned the martyr. The Sanhedrists were indeed "cut to the heart" by the Saint's argument, but the only end gained by this was that they were goaded to fury and bore him away to death, in defiance of the Roman law forbidding them

to inflict capital punishment. Thus Stephen's miracles and wonderful preaching seem not to have made many converts for Christ from among His enemies.

II. But just the contrary is true of his holy death. For, (a) He sealed with his blood a protest which he had been making against Christians continuing to participate in the temple service, and thus ultimately his martyrdom went far to free the Church from her Jewish swaddling-bands. (b) The persecution against the Church at Jerusalem which his death seems to have occasioned scattered the Christians abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria preaching the Gospel. Thus the beautiful meekness of the martyr and his long suffering, leading him to pray for his most cruel murderers, wrought world-wide good, whereas the flattering success of the preacher had failed.

III. When it is said of our Saint that "he fell asleep," we have what was apparently the first use of an expression for death, afterwards very frequently used by Christians. The holy martyr had taught the Church how peacefully one can die, even under a shower of stones heaped upon him by furious foes. Shall not I, also, do a great service for Christ, simply through exemplifying in my life the Character of Him Who is 'long suffering, though He is provoked every day'?

Wednesday after the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Lowliness Promotes the Kingdom.

Read the Epistle to Philemon.

I. St. Paul was surely one of the greatest geniuses the world has ever produced, yet he constantly refused

to impress himself upon his hearers; and he was able to assure the Church that all the other apostles felt as he did. "We preach not ourselves," he wrote to the Ephesians, "but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. iv: 5). And he rebuked the Corinthians severely because they were broken up into factions, one of which claimed to be "of Paul," another "of Apollos," and a third "of Cephas," so that only a fourth party declared itself to be "of Christ." "Is Christ divided?" he asked them sternly. "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" If I am successful or popular as a teacher of the holy Faith, my great need will be that lowliness which will keep me in my place as a lamp in which shines the Light of the World.

II. The Christian whose self-assertion has been crucified has a subtle tactfulness in helping others. St. Paul even uses a clever little play-upon-words in order to make the manumission of Onesimus an attractive thought to Philemon. "Yea, brother," he wrote, "let me have joy," or "profit," "of thee in the Lord"; and the word for profit is the same as that which is the root of "Onesimus." Thus he delicately suggests that his profit in Philemon is to be the latter's charity to his runaway slave. Tradition has it that both master and servant became bishops; but, at all events, the captivity of Saul wrought the manumission of Onesimus. So shall it be that when I have brought every thought into captivity to Christ I shall free many souls from slavery far more degrading than that of Philemon's servant.

III. How great was the zeal of Christ's prisoner for the salvation of souls! No sooner had he issued from the first captivity than he began preaching the

Gospel again, when he knew that his life was likely to pay the forfeit, as indeed it did. And like the great Apostle, I shall labor more abundantly, the more grace has taken the place of self (1 Cor. xv: 10).

Thursday after the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Weekness in Speech. Read 1 St. Tim. iii : 7-11

I. Let us learn from the blessed saints of the Apostolic Church to discipline that unruly little member, our tongue. A note of counsel, put with almost satirical pointedness, is given us by St. Paul when he complains of some among the Thessalonians that they 'were not busy at all, but were busybodies.' The use of the same Greek word in both cases is evidently meant by the saintly writer to make us feel the contrast between people who "work" and those who "work around" among their neighbors' affairs (2 Thess. iii: 11).

II. There is a second suggestion, intended in the first instance for women of a particular group, but applying to us all. For the Apostle, in verse seven, chooses that Greek word for the devil which means literally "slanderer," and presently he urges that Christians should not be "slanderers." The general principle, evidently, is that when we sin with our lips by saying anything against our neighbor's character, though it be but an innuendo, we become like him who is "the slanderer," "the father of lies" and "the adversary" of souls. But we must not confine ourselves to reflecting upon the misuse of speech. Let us resolve to be positively Christian in our reaction upon actual insult or any other injury. St. Peter, speaking

of this very difficult kind of meekness, tells us that we are not to 'render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise to bless our enemies,' in honor of the meekness of our Lord, from which, in spite of all our sins, we may assuredly believe that we shall "inherit a blessing" (1 St. Pet. iii: 9). And the Wise Man enforces this motive for Christian charity in speech by another even more powerful. He urges us to consecrate our mouths for a ministry to men like Jesus' Own; for he says, "The lips of the righteous feed many" (Prov. x: 21), his word for "feed" being that which is used of a shepherd pasturing his flock. My words this day, please God, shall convey naught but blessings to others' souls.

Friday after the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

True Poverty: Its Power for Good. Read St. John xvii: 20-24

I. When Jesus was born in the utter poverty of the manger, He brought such a blessing to Bethlehem that ever since it has been even obviously under the tender providence of God. In these latter centuries, when all the remainder of Palestine has been cursed with Mohammedanism, and that even in places which are shrines of special Christian devotion, this "House of Bread" has been entirely Christian. It is as if God had designed to set before the eyes of all the world the sign of his special favor toward voluntary poverty in spirit and in material things.

II. The more detached we are from our personal plans and interests, the more we shall acquire that essential quality of efficient service, a free, certain, firm hand in helping others. Our Lord Himself has set us the example of being diffident about asserting

our wishes for ourselves, but definite and decided when we seek the good of our fellow-men. For while He said as to that which was vital to Himself, "Not My will but Thine be done," He did not hesitate to pray for Christians thus: "Father, *I will* that they also, whom Thou has given Me, be with Me where I am."

III. The desire of a saint to reproduce Bethlehem in his own Italian mountains has led to the invention of the crèche, before which so many hearts have burned with love for Christ, so many resolutions have been made, and so many prayers offered! It was because St. Francis had only Christ, and knew how perfectly He satisfies all souls, that it occurred to him to give us a means of gaining riches through the poverty of His holy Nativity. For unselfish love of Jesus is very ingenious in finding ways of disseminating itself. And this divine charity is fed by the fuel of sacrifices by which we, being rich, for sake of others make ourselves poor.

Saturday after the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Christian Holiness Winning Souls. Read Phil. ii: 12-16

I. The destiny of the most obscure Christian is truly a glorious one, even in this present world! For he is to be 'a blameless and harmless son of God, without blemish, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. He is to shine as a light in the world and to be always holding forth the word of life.' As the soldiers of Gideon charged upon the Midianites and their allies with no weapons but covered torches in their left hands and trumpets in their right, so we

are to carry in our hearts and our lives the Light of the World, and by our example to sound the trumpet of the Gospel. St. Chrysostom used to say that if the Church were what she ought to be for one day, the world would be converted before nightfall.

II. Bishop Lang confesses frankly that the clergy can no longer arouse repentance by threats or warnings or denunciation. Preaching has declined because no longer is there the necessary atmosphere of accepted beliefs, and also the phrases of religion have become too familiar to be any longer taken very much to heart. There is but one way left: the sense of sin, the revival of conscience, can only come through the attractive, constraining power of the vision of goodness seen in Christian characters. In such an age as this it is doubly incumbent upon me to grow in holiness.

III. For a simple, perfectly uneventful, Christian life, has a saving, eternal value. St. Peter, with this thought in mind earnestly prays us to 'have our behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against us, they may, by our good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in *the Day of Visitation.*' The soul which has lived with the standard of the Perfect Life always before it shall at the Visitation of the Judge be astonished to find at our Lord's Right Hand those who have been saved simply by the vision of its daily life.

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Ministering Grace to Others. Read the Epistle for the Day.

I. St. Paul thanked God on behalf of Christians, because they are enriched by Jesus Christ "in all utterance, and in all knowledge," so that we lack no

gift which an all-wise Providence could bestow upon us. The testimony of our Lord in the blessed Gospel, also, has been "confirmed in us," since our experience has proved it to be true. Would it not be the height of refined selfishness if I received all this from my Saviour, and yet did nothing for Him, or for my neighbor's soul? I must minister grace to all who hear the words I speak (Eph. iv : 29).

II. There is a pathetic plea which Job made to his false comforters. 'To him that is ready to faint,' said the afflicted patriarch, 'kindness should be showed from his friend ; else might he forsake the fear of the Almighty.' And in the verses which follow he compares the soul which has no appropriate help for another in its need to those mountain brooks 'which are black by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow hideth itself ; but what time they wax warm, they vanish, when it is hot they are consumed out of their place.' Those who come for aid to such persons as these seem to him like the caravans crossing the desert, which see the apparently full stream in the distance and journey towards it for refreshment, but on arrivial find only bare, dry sand. Famishing, "they go up into the waste, and perish" (vi : 14-18, R.V. marg.). Surely it is a solemn thought that some soul might come to me dumbly entreating the words of eternal life, and should turn away to starve in the wilderness of the world.

III. In these days, much is being done for the bodies and minds of people in many kinds of charitable institutions. But it has been well said that "charity to the soul is the soul of charity." My highest duty, therefore, is to communicate to others grace, which is the life-principle of immortal souls.

Monday after the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Salt of the Earth. Read St. Matt. v: 1-13

I. "Nothing is more useful than salt and sunshine," says Pliny. Our Lord has set the seal of divine approval on the first half of the philosopher's aphorism. "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another," He said to the apostles. Now His grace is the salt of which He spoke, as becomes plain to us through an interpretative passage in St. Paul. Writing to the Colossians, the Apostle counseled them: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." If I am, indeed, to "rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep," it must be through the grace of Christ which will impart to me the universal helpfulness of Him from Whom it comes. And evidently my Lord expects His people to be full of grace, for He has said: "Ye *are* the salt of the earth."

II. The soul which has fallen from grace is like savorless salt. For as this latter is worse than useless, being actually bad for land, as alkali is, so a soul which has forfeited grace, or lapsed from it, is a menace to all with whom it comes into contact. Our gentle Saviour Himself declares that it is fit for nothing but to be trodden under men's feet, just as salt without savor is strewn upon the streets in Eastern cities.

III. But the salt of grace brings a double blessing to my soul: (a) It saves me from corruption; (b) It makes Christianity palatable to the people of the world, whose taste for spiritual things is very languid. Through Christian beauty of character our religion becomes attractive where before it seemed insipid. Yet, of course, I must not be trying to watch the

growth of my own holiness. I must simply be faithful about my prayers and religious duties, and feel sure that thus I, like my Lord, will increase in favor with God and man.

Tuesday after the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Light of the World. Read St. Mark iv : 21-25

I. There is always great danger in the hurried, crowded life we lead, that our value to the world as Christians will become submerged beneath the stream of affairs which make up our daily business. It is against this that our Lord warns us when He points out that just as a lamp is not to be put under a bushel-measure or under a bed, but on a stand, so we are not to allow the light of our spirituality to be covered over by the occupations of our profession or the cares of our station.

II. In another instruction, Christ points out that the life of His disciple is like a city that is set on a hill; it cannot be hid. We are certain to draw comment—favorable, or unfavorable,—simply because as Christians we are professed imitators of the Perfect Man.

III. In Holy Scripture, it is said that my spirit is the lamp of the Lord (Prov. xx : 27, R.V.). I will strive, therefore, to make it a light-house with a kindly search-light that turns in every direction. For many are the souls around me which are sailing over midnight seas. I will strive to be all things to all men, if by all means I may gain some. Certainly I may rightly hope to be of widely extended service, since I carry in my heart the "Light Which lighteneth every man."

Wednesday after the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Girded Loins and Burning Lamps. Read St. Luke xii: 35-40

I. Two things our Saviour effects for us during this present period of our waiting for His Second Advent: (1) He confirms us unto the end; that is, He so establishes our hearts in fortitude that we become firm through His Passion, able to bear pressure and endure the shocks of the world; (2) He purifies us little by little, that we may be entirely blameless when we, with all other souls, meet Him in His Own great Day. Now the intention of our Lord, and after Him of St. Paul, St. Peter and the other New Testament writers, was to leave us in absolute ignorance as to when He would appear, and yet always keenly and immediately expecting Him. And my attitude towards the Second Advent is to be that of the early Church, not of servile fear, but of eager hope. 'From Heaven,' St. Paul wrote to his beloved Philippians, 'We watch eagerly for our Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour' (Phil. iii: 20). Yet I cannot face the certain prospect of falling into the hands of the living God, to receive His just judgment, until by His grace He has first become "my strength and my salvation."

II. If I follow the intention of my Lord and the wisest of His great saints, I shall try to live as though each moment were the last before the Judgment Day. Let me make it a habit to ask myself: How would I perform this action, if I knew it would be the very last of my life? "For yet a very little while," the Apostle wrote to the Hebrews, "and He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry; but 'My righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrink back, My Soul hath no pleasure in him'" (Heb. x: 37 f., R.V. marg.).

I am, therefore, commanded to live discerning my unseen Judge and the invisible grace of the sacraments by my faith.

III. Christ Himself, also, enjoined upon us preparedness for His return. "Let your loins be girded about," He said; "and your lamps burning." The long oriental robe must be girded up to leave its wearer free for active work. So we must gird ourselves to live active, hardworking, Christian lives. And our "burning lamps" are to be souls filled with the oil of the Holy Ghost, which is grace, and burning with the love of God and our fellow-men.

Thursday after the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Great Decision. Read Deut. xxvii: 11-13; xxx: 19-20

I. Moses presented to the Israelites the issue which confronts God's people in all ages. He divided the tribes, setting some on one side of the valley and the rest on the other, according as they were to repeat curses upon those who should depart from God or blessings upon those who should continue steadfastly in His service. He then gave the people their choice, saying, "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore, choose life, . . . that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His Voice and that thou mayest cleave unto Him, for He is thy life."

II. There is no possible compromise, therefore, between the full acceptance of Jesus, with His burden and His grace, and the having my part and lot with those who are against Him. Moreover, to repudiate His Cross means our own destruction. In the Cross

is bane or blessing. If I reject it, refusing His service, then the fact that He was crucified for me will make for my condemnation. If I accept His call, take up the Cross and follow Him, it will be my salvation and life.

III. But God intends me to find in the Cross of my Saviour not a menace but the very remedy which I must have for the wounds sin has made in my soul. The common remedy for the blisters of poison ivy is an oil made out of goldenrod. And nature would teach us by this little parable to regard the grace obtained for us by our Saviour's Passion as the blessed cure of the poison with which the wickedness of the earth has infected us. I will wholeheartedly embrace that religion of the saints, of which both the faith and the practice have been learned from the Crucified.

Friday after the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Jesus' Tenderness with Souls. Read Psalm xli.

I. Our Lord took revenge upon mankind for rejecting and crucifying Him by coming forth from the grave to grasp in His human Hand all power in Heaven and earth and use it for men's salvation. "Raise Thou Me up again, and I shall reward them," is His unspoken prayer, in Gethsemane and on the Cross, for His whole Heart was full of plans for blessing our guilty race.

II. Jesus has a special tenderness in His way of treating souls which have been disloyal to Him, because He desires to win them back by His delicate kindness. He did not hesitate to rebuke St. Peter's fault in very severe terms, saying, "Get thee behind Me, *Satan.*" But When Judas Iscariot had turned

against Him, perhaps by rejecting the revelation of the Blessed Sacrament which Christ had just made, He denounced the apostate in terms so general as to entirely avoid identifying him. "Have I not chosen you twelve," He said, "and one of you is a devil" (St. John vi : 70 f.).

III. Although there is no division, or contradiction, between the will of the Father and that of the Son, yet it is part of the divine economy of our salvation that Jesus by His intercession should often stay the heavy Hand of God's justice. He suggests this merciful office of His in His parable of the unprofitable fig tree. The owner would have commanded it to be destroyed, had it not been that "the dresser of his vineyard" pleaded that it might be given another chance to bear fruit. How many, many times my unprofitable service has merited God's sentence that I should be no longer allowed to cumber the ground. But the pierced Hand of my Saviour has always interposed between me and my fate.

Saturday after the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Jesus to the Rescue! Read Zech. iii : 1-5.

I. The Scripture represents the Almighty Word of God as leaping down from Heaven out of His Royal Throne, "as a fierce man of war into the midst of the doomed land" (Wisdom xviii : 14 f., A.V. marg.). His coming was, therefore, on a mission of rescue. And my soul was in peril of eternal death until He saved it. In the Psalm which describes the Passion of the God-man with remarkable clearness of detail, a soul cries out in thanksgiving to our Lord that He

had answered its prayer for the help which had lifted it up from among the horns of the wild oxen (Ps. xxii : 21, A.V. marg.). So it has been with me also, and my whole life should be filled with thanksgiving.

II. The scene of a soul's trial for its life is revealed to us in our passage. It stands before the "Angel of the Lord," Who is presently called "the Lord," and Satan has stationed himself at its right hand to be its adversary. But the Lord, Who is Judge, is also this soul's Advocate. Wherefore He says to Satan, "the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Continuing, He directs that the angels take away the filthy garments from him who but now was on trial, and to put upon him rich apparel. Dear Jesus, Who art to be my Judge, let me claim Thee now as my Advocate.

III. Even in that sterner part of the Bible, the Old Testament, our Lord is shown to be reluctant to condemn even the wicked. Thus, Isaiah represents Him as saying, 'Alas ! I will ease Me of mine adversaries, and avenge Me of mine enemies.' How great then, must be the love of Christ for His friends, even though in their human weakness they love Him but poorly, and serve Him very imperfectly ! My assurance is not because I love my God adequately, but because He loves me infinitely (1 St. John iv : 10).

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Great Physician. Read the Gospel for the Day

I. The whole thought of the paralytic's friends, in to-day's Gospel, was about his physical ailment. How very much of charitable work begins and ends in making men clean, or well, or in obtaining some other

improvement of their physical welfare! But the Great Physician was far wiser than this. He knew that He was treating a festered wound, a misfortune due to sin, like a blow on a bruised place. Therefore, His first word to the man sick of the palsy was, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." He understood that the sufferer's longing for healing of soul was his deepest and most poignant pain.

II. How much tenderer than we was the Good Physician! "Son," was His kind word of greeting to the paralytic. Usually men are very prone to pillory one of their fellows who has been overtaken by the punishment of his sin, especially when the penalty is of a very humbling or degrading sort. But Jesus was accustomed to claim the most despised outcast as His "son" or "daughter."

III. He who was the Wisdom of God was far more truly kind than we know how to be. "Thy *sins*," He said plainly to the invalid. He made no polite, lying excuses for him, as we would have been so likely to do. And the final outcome of the episode was that the unfortunate man was cured in soul as well as body, whereas his friends had looked for nothing save mercy to his physical frame. Yet there was one prerequisite to the great Physician's work, which He waited to have supplied by the friends of the one for whom His help was sought. This essential was their faith. For, we read, "Jesus, *seeing their faith*," spoke the absolving words to the paralytic. And the greatest and most effective service I can do for another is to give him the benefit of my faith, in the form of prayers and good works for his soul's salvation. For by this I shall enable the wisdom of God and the power of God to become active on his behalf.

Monday after the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Definite Faith (I). Read St. John xviii : 33-37

I. The Son of God came into this world to rule over men's hearts. When Pilate challenged Him to say whether or not he was a king He answered by what was in effect a strong affirmative. But then He went on to put alongside the fact that He was a King the other truth that He had come into the world in order to bear witness unto the truth. Therefore His kingdom within me is His rule through the truth which he has revealed to me. The error to which my fallen nature with its dulled intellect is prone would make a false Christ for me, or acknowledge some human impostor in His stead. Only the acceptance of every word Jesus spoke will set Him before me as my King.

II. In our day there is a popular fallacy that insistance upon the definite dogmas of the Catholic Religion is a breach of Christian charity. But our Lord Himself accepted truth from His Father (St. John v : 30 f.). So a Catholic accepts the teaching of the Church rather than his own opinions. Also, when He was speaking with the Samaritan woman, He Who was Incarnate Charity did not hesitate to declare what He knew would be to her an unpalatable truth, that salvation was of the Jews (St. John iv : 22). And in this He was but exemplifying the principle long before enunciated through the Psalmist (cxix : 113) that God hates "them that are of a double mind," or, as St. Paul afterwards phrased it, with whom there is at once "yea, yea and nay, nay" (2 Cor. i : 17).

III. Let me realize the true relation of faith to reason. Faith as the Church has taught from the be-

ginning is superior, but not contrary, to reason. When Christ declared the great cardinal truths about God, it was as if one should relate what he saw to a world of blind men (St. John iii : 11). The blind are able to verify what they are told up to a certain point, but they know that a great part of what is described to them belongs to a wider sphere of experience than theirs. Even so, I must accept the great Christian doctrines on the word of Christ, realizing that they are beyond my powers of full analysis and criticism.

Tuesday after the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Definite Faith (II). Read Heb. xi : 1-6

I, While God must speak to those outside the Christian fold in parables of science or art, He reveals to us the mysteries of his Kingdom (St. Matthew xiii : 11). St. Peter represents our admission to the inner council of the Blessed Trinity concerning our salvation under the figure of the contemperaneous mystery cults. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables,' he says, 'but on the Mount of Transfiguration we were *eye-witnesses* of Christ's majesty.' The rare Greek word which he uses for "eye-witnesses" was a technical one for initiation into the third and highest circle of the Eleusinian Mysteries. And what was granted to the three most intimate friends of Jesus on Mt. Tabor is now freely given to me as well as to every other Catholic.

II. The hindrance which prevents numbers of men from sharing our knowledge of Christ's Mind is the veil over many hearts. (2 Cor. iii. 13-15 ; 1 Cor. ii : 16.) For conscience, here represented by the word 'heart,'

is the intuition of the moral law. If we obey conscience our intuition is brightened, and if we disobey this 'heart' of ours it becomes veiled. But our intuition is also that intellectual faculty which discerns God, aud if it has grown to be more and more aware of the Good through obedience to it, it will also be more and more able to recognize Him who is Infinite Good. And the reverse is equally true. How careful I must be, then, always to do the will of my Heavenly Father, in order that I may know of Christ's doctrine that it is of God. (St. John vii: 17.)

III. Another great principle of the psychology of faith appears in our passage for reading. 'Through faith we understand,' St. Paul teaches. And we might paraphrase his statement thus: 'By faith our intuition of truth is quickened.' The preface to the pursuit of any branch of secular knowledge, therefore, ought to be the acceptance of the Christian Faith. 'I believe,' said St. Augustine, 'that I may know.' If I would insure the success of research into psychology or science, if I aspire to hold true canons of art, I must become by faith *en rapport* with the mind of God wherein all knowledge is one perfect, comprehensive unity.

Wednesday after the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Our Predestination. Read Rom. viii: 29-34

I. God has eternally predestinated each one of us "to be conformed to the image of His son that He might be the First-born among many brethren." Jesus is the Head of the Church, and, therefore, it is He who gives the Character to His mys-

tical Body. Ordinarily, we do not identify a person by his foot or even his hand, but if his head is seen, even though naught of his body, we recognize him at once. Jesus is the Head of that Body of which I am a member. I must not seek to copy any other member of that Body, but to strive that Jesus may be manifested in me.

II. The difference between the blessed saints and ourselves is that they have been receptive of the Holy Spirit of Christ and of His grace. If it depended solely upon God, every one of us would attain to his loftiest perfection. "For the Lord God is a Sun and Shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Thus the Psalmist would have me believe that the only reason our Lord withholds from me any of His grace or the glory of His Spirit is because He dare not give me more than I can use in my imperfect degree of desire for perfection. The blessed Sun of Righteousness would shine upon my soul with His full light and warmth, but He must shield me in part, lest He too greatly increase my responsibility for using His grace.

III. Let me be magnanimous, therefore. Let me refuse to be contented with inferiority, and persevere in seeking after ever greater saintliness.

"Then life is—to wake not sleep,
Rise and not rest, but press
From earth's level where blindly creep
Things perfected, more or less,
To the Heaven's height, far and steep."

Thursday after the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

God Helping Us to Advance to Saintliness. Read Phil. i : 6-11

I. As we climb the road to Heaven, God, Who leads us always upward, yet grants us opportunities of rest as often as we need them. He represents Himself under the figure of a driver who is careful to relieve his oxen from their burden, again and again, and to feed them often. 'I was to them,' our Lord says of His people, 'as they that raise up the yoke over the jaws of the oxen [to rest their shoulders]; and I bent over them and fed them' (Hosea xi:4). How often I have enjoyed a respite from temptation! Have I always stopped to realize that such refreshment was due solely to the careful providence of God my Master?

II. We ought to be "confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." For we ourselves are always eager to finish what we have begun, and the more beautiful and wonderful the result will be, the more we desire to achieve success in our undertaking. So, we may rightly believe, it is with God in regard to finishing each soul, which is His unique masterpiece, for His eternal kingdom.

III. Divine grace is the impelling and assisting force by which my salvation is to be worked out. It only needs that I should permit God to draw me unto Himself. Sometimes on the mountain side one sees heavy logs being slowly dragged upward by a rope which is fastened to a windlass on

the summit. This is the picture of a soul progressing toward saintliness, because it responds to the pull of God in its conscience. But there are some logs also which one sees rotting by the side of the trail. These are symbolical of souls which would not yield to the hand of the great Laborer for their sanctification. God forbid that I should ever become stationary by the side of the way that leads upward.

Friday after the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Help of the Example of God's Saints.

Read Heb. xiii: 7-14

1. St. Paul's favorite figure for the Christian strife is the race, which was a notable feature of the popular games in his time. In the verses which immediately follow his long list of saints and martyrs (Heb. xi), he gives us some remarkable details of this allegorical metaphor. Thus, the One Who 'sets our race before us,' the "Agonothetes" of our Christian contest, is the King of Saints. And there is the usual stripping of the athletes, when they step forth detached from all that would hinder them in running their race; for the Apostle's words, "Let us lay aside every weight," mean literally, "Let us strip (it) off as a garment."

II. The "spectators," who are thought of as taking the same vivid interest in the contest as the pagans displayed in their amphitheaters, are the saints. The sacred writer has told us in the preceding chapter how they had in their day won the race by confessing Christ and passing beyond the

goal-line of death into His waiting Arms. Below (xiii:7, A. V. marg.) he urges the Hebrews to remember those who have evangelized them and to follow their faith, "considering the issue of their life" by martyrdom. And the word translated "considering" means really "picturing again and again." This great teacher of sanctity would have me frequently bring before my mind the victorious deaths by which Christ's saints have glorified Him, and realize that they are looking down from Heaven to witness the triumph over His enemies which I am to achieve.

III. When the Apostle speaks of the weight which we are to lay aside, his meaning is probably threefold. For the words may mean: (1) Bulk of body, to be trained off by Christian asceticism; (2) arrogant bearing to be humbled; (3) any incumbrance, as of some sinful earthly attachment. No doubt Christ's great athlete intends that we shall "lay aside" every such "weight," that we may not be handicapped in straining forward "toward the goal unto the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii:14, R. V. marg.).

Saturday after the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Interest the Saints Take in Our Strife.

Read Hosea ii: 14-23

I. "The Church above," declares St. Austin, "loves and helps its pilgrim brothers." It would be a very false, unnatural view of the members of the Church Triumphant if we supposed that they

are careless of our fate. And indeed God leaves us no room for question, since He has more than once assured us in the Scriptures of Heaven's deep interest in our salvation. Thus that most loving prophet, Hosea, is His mouthpiece in making to the Catholic Church His promise that the blessed saints shall hearken to our petitions for their prayers, and intercede for us acceptably before Him. "It shall come to pass in that day," were His words, "that I will answer, * * * I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth."

II. If I may confidently request the prayers of my devout friends here in the world, how much more may I seek those of my holy friends above! For they realize, as no person, however pious, can realize while yet on the hither side of the veil, what Heaven is with its unspeakable, eternal happiness. and what, in awful contrast, are the pains of Hell. But the blessed saints now see plainly what a choice lies before us during our period of probation. And even Dives, when he knew very dimly what they understand well, prayed for his brethren (St. Luke xvi:27f). How much more fervently will the redeemed of Christ, who are being inflamed by their nearness to the Furnace of Love in the Heart of Jesus, intercede for their brethren battling in the arena for their own salvation and the honor of Jesus.

III. We must allow, also, for the saints' zeal for the increase of the love that is due to God. A great bonfire burning up in the night makes the dark heavens overhead glow with its flames; but when it sinks down, gloom once more shrouds the skies. So it is, that when the fire of holy charity

towards God is kindled in our hearts and blazes brightly upward, the blessed ones rejoice in company with their King. Only when we become cold and indifferent does that special radiance of their joy pass away.

The Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

God's First-Born Children. Read Heb. xii: 18-24

I. In the Gospel today we are told of that wedding-feast which the king has spread for his kinsmen and friends. Now the blessed saints are those guests at the banquet of divine good things who are even now wearing their wedding garments of perfected righteousness. They are the ninety and nine who need no repentance. It is this thought which St. Paul expresses very beautifully in the Greek of our passage. 'We are come,' he declares, 'to the festival assembly and Church of the first-born, who are enrolled in Heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect.'

II. Thus we find the great apostle speaking of the saints as God's first-born children. But elsewhere it is Christ Whom he calls "the First-born among many brethren" (Rom. viii:29). When we take the two passages together, it becomes evident that Jesus is in His saints and they in Him, wherefore it is right to consider that they share their King's primogeniture, and its glorious prerogative of service to His brethren in the world.

III. Bishop Westcott makes this illuminating comment on our relation to God's first-born: "Christian believers in Christ, alike living and dead, are united in the Body of Christ. In that body we

have fellowship with a society of 'eldest sons' of God who share the highest glory of the Divine Order. Thus the idea of the communion of saints gains distinctness. The word suggests still another thought. The 'first-born' in Israel were the representatives of the consecrated nation. We may then be justified in regarding these, the first-born in the Christian Church, the first-born of humanity, as preparing the way, in Him Who is 'the First-born' (Rom. viii:29), for many brethren. Through them creation enters on the beginning of its consummation."

Monday after the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

The Saints' Part in Our Salvation. Job. xlii: 1-10

I. It is a principle of God's plan for saving mankind that the elder brothers should help the younger and weaker children. This is illustrated by His sending the souls which had offended Him to His holier ones, that they might be forgiven at the prayer of these saints. For example, our Lord said to the three false comforters that His wrath was kindled against them because they had not spoken of Him the thing that was right, as Job had. "Therefore," He commanded, "take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering: and my servant Job shall pray for you. For him will I accept, lest I deal with you after your folly" (xlii:8). In this way God would teach me that I must offer my own prayers, the "calves

of my lips," but also I should seek the intercessions of His saints, inasmuch as I have often misrepresented and belied Him.

II. It is a striking proof of the truth that God helps souls by the ministry of other souls, that He has more than once told us of His fruitless search for an intercessor when He desired to withhold His severe punishment from a guilty people. "I sought," are His words in one such passage, "for a man among them, that should build up the wall and stand in the gap before me for the land that I should not destroy it. But I found none" (Ezek. xxii:30). And He Himself has set watchmen upon the walls of the New Jerusalem "which shall never hold their peace day nor night." They are the "Lord's remembrancers," and He Himself has charged them to "give Him no rest," "till He make [the Church] a praise in the earth" (Isa. lxii:6, A. V. marg.).

III. On their own part, the blessed ones are lovingly eager to claim a share in Christ's redemptive work. While He ever liveth to make intercession for us, they are not idle. Andrew runs with speed to bring his brother; Peter is still made to fish for men, and Paul is ever again sent far hence unto the Gentiles. May they and all the saints unite their orisons for my poor soul!

Tuesday after the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

Awareness of the Church Triumphant.

Read St. Luke xx : 34-36 ; 1 Cor. v : 3 f.

I. The holy company of heaven behold our needs and know when we seek their prayers, since all things are reflected in the mirror of Jesus' heart. For: (a) they are equal unto the angels, who know when a sinner on earth repents, because they see our Saviour's joy (St. Luke xv:10). (b) St. Paul tells us that souls shall know even as they have been known when they see our Lord face to face; and as during their earthly pilgrimage the saints' every spiritual need was perfectly known to our Saviour, it follows that now they must know as well as this when we seek the help of their intercessions.

II. Indeed, the holy saints are *more* sensitive to others' spiritual needs than they were during their life in the world. Saintly Bishop Pearson rightly argues that, if we have communion with other members of Christ on earth, all the more we ought to have with disembodied ones, because the union between soul and soul is less obstructed, when they are less separated by the obstacle of the flesh. Some of the saints have in fact even in the present world proved this truth by their insight into the condition of others' souls. St. Catherine of Sienna, for example, states in her letters that when she prays for a soul, there and then in her prayers, she can see whether there is the light of grace in it, and that at one time it is full of spiritual consolation, and at another full of shadows and temptations.

III. It is right for us to hope that in any special need some one of the saints may be very near us. It seems not presumptuous to think that St. Paul has a special sympathy and love for those who hold the Catholic faith in that same purity in which He bequeathed it to us. Writing to the Corinthians (I, v:3f) he could say boldly that, while absent in body, he had been present in spirit in their council. For when they had been gathered together, his spirit had been unseen in their midst. How often that same dear spirit may have been Christ's agent in keeping our part of the Catholic Church from lapsing into heresy!

Wednesday after the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

The Saints' Sympathy for Us. Read 1 Cor xii: 12-27

I. All who belong to the Catholic Church, whether in its "Militant" or "Expectant" or "Triumphant" part, are members of the Body of Christ, of His Flesh, and of His Bones (Eph. v:30). All, therefore, that grieves or injures or rejoices one Christian affects in like manner all others who are sensitive to the condition of the one affected. "Whether one member suffer," St. Paul teaches, "all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."

II. St. John was allowed both to see and to reveal to us the earnest devotion of the blessed ones in Heaven to their oppressed brethren in the world. "The souls under the altar" in his vision are mar-

tyrs who are, until the General Resurrection, allowed to see and know the Blessed Trinity only through the veil of Jesus' Humanity thought of as the Heavenly Altar, according to St. Bernard's interpretation. They were heard praying our Lord to avenge their blood on the cruel persecutor of their fellow Christians on earth, that is, the Roman Empire. Theirs was no vulgar thirst for the blood of their own murderers, but an intercession for the Church already suffering the terrible scourge of Domitian's wrath. Surely their zeal for the divided Christendom of our day, beset by enemies without and torn by dissension within, is not less than it was when there was far less danger of their brethren in the world apostatizing.

III. St. Bernard, commenting on St. Paul's words, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God," gives us the following precious assurance: "To have our heart in Heaven is to have one foot in Paradise. And all the saints who wait for us to have their perfect consummation (Heb. xi:40) will unite their prayers to keep us firm."

Thursday after the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

The Wedding Feast of the King. Read 1 Cor. x: 16-21

I. In the parable of this week's Gospel there is one feature which our Lord does not develop fully, because He rightly assumed that it would be in the minds of His hearers. This was the fact that when

the beggars were brought in from the highroads the king himself supplied them with beautiful robes. Beside the portal of his palace stood a servant whose duty it was to clothe each guest with the wedding garment, for this was a custom in the houses of wealthy and noble people of the time. Now, this precious vesture symbolizes the white garment of righteousness which the King of Heaven, of his gratuitous love and mercy, supplies to each soul at its baptism. He clothed me with it, and has brought my naked natural ugliness into harmony with the immaculate purity of His other guests, the saints.

II. The feast of the ruler in the parable represents the Holy Eucharist. It is when Church Militant and Church Triumphant gather together before the altar of the "Lamb as It had been slain," that we are most closely united with the blessed saints. Immediately after the first celebration of this holy Banquet, Christ and His Apostles left the upper room. It is probable that they visited the temple, which on that night alone was open. There those words of our Lord, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," were spoken, as they stood together looking up at the great golden vine which ornamented the facade. Thus the first definite teaching that the Catholic Church is one organism was given to God's guests at the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament.

III. St. Paul, according to his custom, develops the truth upon which we are reflecting. Describing the Food of the Divine Banquet, he says: "The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not a participation in the Body of

Christ? Seeing that we, who are many, are one Loaf, one Body" (R. V. marg.). By my communion I am brought into almost incredible union with Christ's honored members in Heaven.

Friday after the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

Our Private Devotions at the Eucharist.

Read St. Mark xiv: 3-9

I. Our Lord almost never uses the pronoun "we" with reference to Himself and human persons, for He must carefully maintain His unique dignity as God's only-begotten Son. Yet there are two distinct instances where He spoke thus, so as to include the Apostles with Himself. "He that is not against *us*," were His remarkable words, "is on our part." By this He would teach us of his close union with the Christian ministry. Once again, when He was giving His directions for that Passover which was the preface to the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, He said, referring to the upper room, "There make ready for *us*." In this way He indicated that He is peculiarly united with His people when they gather around Him at the Christian Passover.

II. The blessed Magdalene's offering to her Lord was worth three hundred denarii. We realize how large this sum was in that day, when we remember that the Samaritan in the parable gave only two denarii for the entertainment and nursing of the wounded traveller (St. Luke x:35). Scholars tell us, also, that the ordinary wage for a man

was one denarius a day, so that the ointment poured out upon our Lord's head was valued at a year's earnings of a laborer. Yet our Lord approved of St. Mary's act. Surely I can make no mistake, therefore, if I take from my more active service the short half hour of the Eucharist to pour out my adoration at His feet.

III. For He said that, unlike the poor, He is not always with us, in *His Human Nature*. It is, then, when He comes as Man in the Blessed Sacrament that I am to adore Him with special devotion. This was the only anointing His Body received. I will praise Him at the Eucharist as if my praise is to be all He will receive.

Saturday after the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

Carrying Away the Blessing of the Eucharist.

Read Baruch iv : 20-24

I. The literal meaning of our Lord's words defending the pouring out of the precious ointment upon Him is, "She has wrought a good work *in Me*." That is to say, St. Mary's deed was one possessing true moral splendor because she had brought it into relation with Him. Let me, then, bring every important enterprise of mine to Jesus at the Eucharist in the early morning. For as Swete rightly says: "The beauty of a good act varies according to the relation in which it stands to Christ." (St. Mark xiv : 6).

II. Christ can now journey on to other villages, and into other hearts, only as we carry His love

and His Character with us from the Church's altar. "The history of the Church," says Bishop Westcott, "is nothing less than the history of the Risen Christ working through the Body in which He lives."

III. It is sinfully wasteful to go away from a beautiful service, where our devotion has been stimulated by lights and music and vestments, and retain none of the inspiration which has been so lavishly given us. In our passage, the sacred writer says that he has "put off the clothing of prosperity, and put upon him the sackcloth of his prayer." Now, the "clothing of prosperity" was the garment worn at religious festivals. The energy of my Sunday morning devotion must always be transmuted into power for ascetical intercession and kindred Christian labors.

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

Miracles of the Church. Read St. John xiv: 5-12

I. There will always be a type among men who will not believe except they see signs and wonders. To meet this need of our race our Saviour provided that, at least from time to time, miracles should be wrought by His Church. Indeed, He promised with the double "verily" which marks His most solemn statements: "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto My Father." Every priest is familiar with the fulfilment of that part of this commission to the body of the faithful, which grants us power

to perform *the same miracles* as those our Lord wrought. For he has often seen the expiring infant return to life after Holy Baptism, or one whose life was despaired of entirely restored to health as the result of the administration to him of Holy Unction. Miraculous answers to prayer are so common among us that we are in danger of allowing them to seem commonplace.

II. But what does our Lord mean by saying that we shall do *greater works* than His? We must remember that when He spoke these words He had not yet celebrated the Holy Eucharist. He had, indeed, changed water into wine, but He left with the priesthood the power to consecrate wine and so make it His precious Blood. Kingsley, in his vehement hatred of the forces which he beheld crushing the poor of London, once said that only the sign of Holy Communion saved his reeling faith from repudiating the providence of God.

III. There is another work wrought by Jesus Christ through His Church which is greater even than miraculous cures of sick bodies. It is the creation of Christian character. When we find people, perhaps of plain education and few opportunities of learning theology, with an intimate and practical knowledge of the most subtle spiritual truths, we ought to count this to be indeed a stupendous work of that divine grace which the Church is empowered to minister. Would that my poor soul might become a great "work" and "sign" of the divine power vested in my Holy Mother.

Monday after the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

Our Defenders Against Satan. Read Ps. xxxiv

I. In one of the Psalms which for many centuries have been recited in the office of compline, just before the community retires to rest for the night, our Lord promises us that He will give His angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways. "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder," He continues, "the young lion and the serpent shalt thou trample under feet." Satan is, of course, the deaf adder against which we are to be defended. He is the basilisk with poisonous breath, the lion thirsting for our blood, yet, because we shall be carried in the arms of Jesus' angels, we shall trample our enemy under foot.

II. It is revealed to us in the Scriptures that St. Michael, the warrior archangel, is "the great prince which standeth for the children of God's people" (Dan. xii:1). He is that angel of the Lord who, with His mighty host of horsemen and chariots of fire (2 Kings vi:17) "encampeth round about them that fear [Christ], and delivereth them."

III. Two other offices of protection to souls are discharged by the blessed angels: (a) Gabriel, it is related in the book of Daniel, being caused to fly swiftly to the prophet, told him, "I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding [against the wiles of Satan]." (b) Elihu, who speaks for God, without incurring His reproach, in the book of Job, declares that when a man's soul 'draweth near unto the pit, and his life to the an-

gels of the pit, if there be an angel with him—an intercessor for him to show what is right—then God is gracious unto him and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit' (xxiii:22 ff.). How often I have owed my escape from mortal sin to the prayers of my holy guardian angel! I will now thank God for sending him to me and will place myself this day under his guidance.

Tuesday after the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

The Church's Protection. Read Eph. v : 24-32

I. Christ Jesus loves and cherishes the Catholic Church as the perfect husband loves his wife. He regards Her as His Own Body, for which He gave the Body He had received from His blessed mother.

II. It will often seem as if our Holy Mother, the Church, is on the very point of destruction, until presently the promise God made Her through the Psalmist is fulfilled. For "He is in the midst of Her, she shall not be moved." "God shall help her at the dawn of the morning," just when the night is blackest and our vitality is lowest (Ps. xlvi:5, R. V. marg.).

III. It is contrary to the very nature of a creature that he should be self-sufficient. Even the devils, who are surely the most determined individualists, had to depend upon some one or some thing. The one who was driven out from a soul, in Christ's parable, wandered about finding no rest until he returned and entered again into the person

from whom he had been exorcised (St. Matt. xii: 44). The legion who were on the point of being sent away out of the Gadarene, besought our Lord to let them enter into swine. Shall I, then, a member of the Lord's Flesh and Bones, refuse to place my whole dependence upon Him?

Wednesday after the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

In the Hand of God. Read St. John x: 25-30

I. Do I ever forget that God is holding me so securely that no injury can ever reach me, except it be by the consent of my own will? Our Lord spared no pains to assure me that I am in His Hand and in His Father's Hand. It is as if God were my mother and I were a little nursing child. In any moment of gloom, or timidity, or vain self-confidence, I can lift up my heart and say to this tender Divine Parent, "My soul hangeth upon Thee, Thy right hand hath upholden me."

II. No human guardian would show me more than a faint gleam of this protecting, divine love which embraces me. Isaiah represents the infinite care of Jesus for me in two tender metaphors. "A bruised reed," says the prophet, "shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench" (Isa. xlii:3). A shepherd lad has made himself a pipe, and after playing upon it for a time, has thrown it aside so that it is trodden under foot and crushed. As it lies there, it is surely the best of symbols for a soul which has fallen, is crushed and cast away by men. Yet Christ has a care for

it. He will take it in His hands, repair it by His divine wisdom, and make it once more an instrument into which the Holy Spirit may breathe His inspiration.

III. The smouldering wick of a lamp suggests a soul whose love of God has burned very low, so that now it is flickering a moment before it quite goes out. Even Christians despair of such a one, or become impatient and snuff out the tiny blaze. It is only our Saviour's love which so cherishes a spark of divine charity, that he will not quench it, but will kindle it into a steady flame. Whatever my failings should be, at least I will always flee to Jesus, and will never be afraid to claim His tender forgiveness and restoring love.

Thursday after the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

Wisdom's House. Read Prov. ix.

I. Solomon, writing for the young crown prince the lessons he had learned from his own bitter experience, has left us an inspired picture of Divine Wisdom, and the attractive imitation of It which Satan artfully makes. "Wisdom," he said under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, "hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars" [the sacraments of the Catholic Church]. "She hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table." Her invitations to the Banquet of the Blessed Sacrament are published from the pinnacles of the high buildings in Jerusalem. "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither," she cries. "Come,

eat of My Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled." "Forsake the foolish and live, and walk in the way of understanding." Now the Woman of Folly, who is the caricature of Holy Wisdom, sits also on a seat in the high places of the city, and calls out to the passer-by an invitation which is like a parody on that of her opposite. "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither," she cries. But instead of the Blessed Sacrament she offers to 'him who wanteth understanding,' the "stolen waters" and "secret bread" of spiritual wickedness. And often he does not apprehend that her guests are in the depths of Hell. All down the ages of the Church, Satan has loved to maintain some cult or fashionable vice which outwardly would seem consistent with the ways of Divine Wisdom; and these patent imitations exist to-day and have every one of them a powerful following. But my place shall be at Holy Wisdom's Table.

II. My Lord and Saviour is the Wisdom of God (Prov. viii:1,30f.). It is He Who is being caricatured. I resolve, therefore, that no false miracles, and no seductive philosophy claiming to instruct me and really leading me into the denial of my Lord, shall deceive me into entering the house of the Woman of Folly.

III. During our Lord's ministry in the world there was one little, unknown group of His people who recognized Him as their Redeemer and from the first were faithful to Him through all vicissitudes. It was of them He thought when others were despising and rejecting Him, and it comforted His poor human Heart to know of their sympathy with Him. "Wisdom," he exclaimed exult-

antly, "is justified by her children" (St. Matthew xi:19, A. V. marg.). And I ask no loftier destiny than to be one who justifies Divine Wisdom all my life long.

Friday after the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

Christ's Love of the Spiritual Mind. Read St. John xi: 21-33

I. In the midst of the busiest ministry that Priest ever had, Christ would from time to time lead His Apostles far away from their headquarters at Capernaum into the wilderness, or the mountain passes of Hermon and Lebanon (St. Mark vii: 24,31). When the multitude was pressing upon them to hear the Gospel, as well as to receive material benefits, he would turn to the twelve and say, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile" (St. Mark vi: 31). In the quiet of some secluded gorge of the northern mountains, He could instruct them about their own souls' needs and the deep, eternal verities of His kingdom.

II. It troubled our Lord so that he groaned in spirit, when He saw that the great spiritual truth which He had sought to teach about the Resurrection went almost unheeded, because His hearers were so completely absorbed in their natural grief over Lazarus's death. He would have me give my major interest to the hidden eternal verities, and not focus my mind upon the external, temporal face of events, even those which are the most solemn and impressive of my natural life.

III. One of the severest rebukes ever administered to any of the Twelve by their loving, gentle

Master was that which He addressed to St. Peter: "Get thee behind me, Satan," He said, "thou art a stumbling block unto Me, for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men" (R. V.). To fasten my attention upon human affairs to the exclusion of God's spiritual business, is to cast an obstacle before the Crucified, because I prevent His promoting His Kingdom through me.

Saturday after the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

Jesus' Love Demanding Ours. Read Isa. xxvii: 1-6

1. No matter what may be the griefs and disasters which shall happen to me or my friends or men anywhere, I can always hear above the crash or distant mutter of the tempest the sweet, clear tones of Him who loved the world better than His Own life. And nothing but the conviction of His Presence can save mankind from being plunged into the depths of pessimism. For the Christian religion did not create physical evil; it only supplies the one possible explanation of it which will reconcile suffering with the belief that God is Love. We may, indeed, think of our whole race as phrasing its one hope in the words of Browning's Hindoo:

> "The very God! Think, Abib; dost thou think?
> So, the All-great, were the All-loving, too.
> So, through the thunder, comes a human voice,
> Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
> Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of mine,
> But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
> And thou must love me who have died for thee!'"

II. The providence of Christ is not simply for the mass of men. It is as much for me alone as if there were no other creatures in the universe. I may, therefore, appropriate to myself that which Jehovah said of His whole people: "A vineyard of red wine is the heart of My beloved. I the Lord do keep it. I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Nor could my deepest needs be satisfied, if it were not for this ceaseless individual love of my Saviour. My soul, dear Lord, "gaspeth unto Thee as a thirsty land."

III. "Blessed," Jesus said, "is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." There are inequalities in the government of the world, and suffering comes to countless multitudes. But for all this I will not be offended in Him who holds all power in Heaven and earth. Through man, from Satan, came all the evil of the world. The Man Christ Jesus has only given us the remedy of His Cross.

The Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

The Stairway of Divine Charity. Read Acts xvii: 24-31

I. God took three steps down from His throne above the heavens in order to save me. 'Being in the form of God, He thought it not a thing He should cling to, but emptied Himself of His heavenly glory, and took upon Him the form of a servant.' Lower still, His unspeakable charity made Him condescend: "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death." Yet even this would not satisfy His boundless love of His poor fallen

creatures. Therefore, He chose to die the death of the Cross (Phil. ii:6ff.).

II. There are also three steps my charity takes, but they are upward to the throne of God: (1) I must do unto others as I would that they should do unto me. This is a rule of fairness and justice, derived from the natural law common to all mankind. (2) I am required to love my neighbor as myself. This means, that I must have the same charity for my brother's soul that I have for my own salvation. It appeals to me for self-consecration, since I can only love my neighbor by seeking for him the best that I know for my own soul. (3) My third step in love for others will place me on a level with my Lord. For He, Himself, said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, *as I have loved you.*" My obligation of holy charity to my brother man is, therefore, as boundless as that which God Incarnate imposed upon Himself. I must be ready even to die for another, that It may save his soul from death.

III. Let me remember that what I do for the least of Jesus' brethren is as if it were done for Him. With this thought I can love my enemies and pray for those who have done me injury. When St. Elizabeth of Hungary laid a leper in the king's own bed, and he was brought by his angry mother to see the indignity which had been thus put upon him, he drew back the covers, and saw only his crucified Master lying there. When I bathe the sores of the least of Jesus' brethren, I salve His Own sacred Wounds.

Monday after the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

A Type of the Blessed Virgin. Read Judges xi: 29-40

I. Let us first grasp the true meaning of Jephthah's vow. As one reads it in the Hebrew, it may be paraphrased as follows: "If Thou, Lord, shalt deliver Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whoever, or whatever thing, cometh forth of the doors of mine house to meet me, when I return victorious, shall surely be the Lord's; but if it be a thing I will offer it up for a burnt offering." In the event, this "Judge" conquered his enemy; and upon his return, it was his maiden daughter who first came forth to meet him. Faithful to his obligation, he allowed her to spend two months with her companions 'bewailing her virginity,' and then devoted her to God as an anchoress. After that, "the daughters of Israel went yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah," that is, to keep her profession-day by a festival.

II. In this Old Testament Religious, we have at once a type of the Blessed Mother and a contrast to her. Jephthah's daughter was offered as a living sacrifice for the victory of God's people over their enemies. And in this she was like that holy Virgin who dedicated herself to God in her girlhood, by an act all the more generous because she did not then know how her people would be benefited by it.

III. The chieftain's daughter, however, was given up to God in some degree against her will. But no constraint was laid upon that Maiden, who

both when presented in the temple and later at the Annunciation freely gave herself to God.

Tuesday after the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

The Gift of Ourself to God. Read Isa. vii: 10-14

I. God's chosen Daughter has very wonderful and beautiful lessons to teach us about the way we are to follow God's special purpose for our soul. She was ignorant of her predestination to special service for Him and for her people, just as we are, but she must have obeyed every inspiration of the Holy Spirit from the time she first began to use her reason. Thus, in some mysterious way, she was led to fulfil the great prophecy about her through Isaiah. For when the prophet says that, "The Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel" (A. V. marg.), he uses a word for "virgin" which indicates a maid from twelve to fifteen years. The root meaning is significant, also, for it indicates "one who withdraws into modest seclusion." Now it must have been at just the age which the prophet had indicated that the saintly child was taken to the temple in Jerusalem and entered upon her life of virginity and retirement. Let me learn from her to correspond with each leading of divine grace.

II. Purely spiritual as was the guidance she had received, Mary had no doubt as to her vocation to virginity. She even challenged the Angel of the Annunciation, on this point, knowing that Satan can appear like an angel of light. "How shall this

be," she asked, "seeing I know not a man?" Evidently, she felt certain that her Son was not to be born of marriage in the usual way, because she knew that she was to be ever a virgin.

III. So complete was Mary's conviction that God had willed her act of self-devotion, that she adopted the very opposite course to that which human wisdom indicated. For she was of David's family, and must have felt more than any other woman of her race that longing of all Jewish women to be wife and mother in the hope that she might bring forth the Saviour of her people. Yet she deliberately took the vow of perpetual virginity. If, like her, I try always to obey the voice of my Lord in the little matters of daily life, I shall know His will with deep certainty when the great issues arise.

Wednesday after the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

The Perfect Man. Read St. Mark ii: 24-28

I. If our Saviour had wished, He might have asserted His Lordship over the sabbath because He was God. But He chose rather to claim control of that day on the ground that he was the Son of Man. 'The sabbath was made for man,' He declared, ' * * * *so that* the Son of Man is Lord also of the sabbath.' In this way He taught us that when we claim the right to guide and help others, we must first cast in our lot with them. True charity dictates that we claim, it may be the children of a mission school, as our own little brothers and sis-

ters, rather than approach them as if we were reaching down to our inferiors.

II. The truth about our Lord's Incarnation is that He took the nature of all five races. In Him was kinship with the Red Indian, the Mongolian, the Malay and the Negro, as well as the Caucasion. As the second Adam, He took into union with His Godhead *all* human nature. Consequently, a Christian cannot consistently deny his brotherhood with every other human being in the world, however low in the scale of development may be the race to which that other belongs.

III. Divine charity for our fellowmen is a sign of spiritual life, in the same way that the beating of the heart proves that there is life in the body. "We know that we have passed from death unto life," St. John writes, "because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1, iii:14).

Thursday after the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

Wedded to the Servant of Man. Read Acts xxi:18-25

I. The union of Christians with their Lord seemed to St. Paul so close that it could not be fitly represented by any other analogy than that of holy marriage. "We are wedded," he says explicitly, "to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." How shall we reckon, then, but that we must accept from our Bridegroom the principles and methods of Christian serv-

ice? For now He claims our soul as the "sister" and "spouse" of His Own (Cant. iv:9).

II. One very important bit of spiritual policy is taught us by our Lord in regard to the way we should treat people's prejudices. We may infer from His own conduct, that it is proper and advisable for us to conform to the customs of people we seek to help, where no teaching of our religion or principle of morals is involved. For example, He reclined at the Passover, this having been for long the custom, although the original ceremony assumed that the meal would be eaten standing (Ex. xii:11). It would probably have shocked the Apostles greatly if He had insisted upon observing the original ritual, since the reclining posture was interpreted as a sign that the slavery of the Egyptian period, typified by the standing position, had passed away at the Exodus.

III. No one could have insisted more strongly than St. Paul on the fact that the ceremonial law of the Old Testament was no longer of obligation in the Christian Church. Faith and grace were the means by which souls were to be saved. Yet when it became an act of charity for him to shave his head in sign of a Nazirite vow, together with four poor men whose temple-fees he would have to pay out of his very small stock of money, besides subjecting himself to the gravest dangers, he unhesitatingly did these things. For in this way he hoped to help the Jews to realize that he was not in the attitude of repudiating the entire Mosaic law, moral as well as ceremonial. Following my Lord and St. Paul, I ought to spare no pains to avoid needlessly hurting others' feelings through the disregard of

their innocent conventions, or inherited prejudices. In these immaterial things I also hope to become all things to all men, so that by all means I may gain some.

Friday after the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

Assisting at a Christian Death. Read St. John xi: 7-15

I. There is no more essential service that I can do my brother than that of assisting his soul to make a safe passage when it is about to leave this world. Our Saviour loved St. Lazarus, and it was when He thought of that young soul making its last journey, that He spoke the solemn words of our passage for reading: "If any man walk in the day he stumbleth not because he seeth the Light of the World; but if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no Light in him." How can I send one whom I love, even if it be with only Christian charity for his soul, into the darkness of death without the Sun of Righteousness in his heart to light him on the way? It may indeed be necessary to give him some natural pain through telling him plainly that his end is approaching. But surely this is not to be compared with the benefit I will confer upon him by obtaining for him the sacraments of the dying, whereby he shall be comforted and strengthened, and finally borne away in Jesus' arms to perfect, glorious, eternal day.

II. I must keep clearly before my mind this truth: There is one great essential for every soul, which is that it must build on Christ as its founda-

tion. If it do this, even though at the very end of life, it "shall be saved, yet so as by fire." All its deeds may have been but as "wood, hay and stubble," which shall be consumed, so that it shall suffer loss of the greater glory it might have received. Yet this soul itself will go away into eternal life. (cp. 1 Cor. iii: 11-15.) If, therefore, I can secure the baptism of a dying person, I shall have saved a soul from eternal death (St. James v:20).

III. Nor may I forget, while I wait upon the dying, that I must watch for the opportunity of giving my Lord very great happiness. When He comes in the Blessed Sacrament and enters into the passing soul, I will think of it as if I heard Him say, "This shall be My rest forever, here will I dwell, for I have a delight herein" (Psalm cxxxii: 15).

Saturday after the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

Love Abounding for Jesus. Read 2 Tim. i: 8-12

I. If I am really responding to the infinite devotion of my Saviour, I shall surrender myself to Him absolutely. First of all, I will give Him my body. Surely it is safer in His keeping than in my own, for if I retain the disposition of my flesh according to my natural bent, I shall become one of those who love pleasure more than God, whose end is destruction. And in order that I may make my gift irrevocable, I will try to remember the approaching disintegration of my body. St. Francis Borgia was content to continue as a soldier and

courtier until the day he saw the body of his once beautiful queen after it had lain in the coffin for some weeks. After that he gladly subjected his flesh to our Lord's yoke in Religion.

II. I will devote my mind to understand and believe all that Jesus teaches me through the Scriptures and the Church. For it is most unsafe for me to assert my individual judgment in any way contrary to the infallible word of God Incarnate. To them that believe not, He sware in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest. Hard as I shall find it, therefore, I will make my will bend to my Lord's easy yoke of the Catholic Faith.

III. But, if I give my body and mind to Christ, surely I will say to Him also, "Into Thy Hands I commend my spirit." How could I more wisely dispose of myself than this? "For I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him, against that day" (R. V.).

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

Coins for God's Treasury. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. Our Lord asks each one of us, concerning the "denarius" of his immortal soul: "Whose is this image and superscription?" Our response to Him is readily to be learned from the Scriptures. "Thou hast formed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb" (Ps. cxxxix:13, A. V. marg.). The superscription of our body, therefore,

belongs to God since it is His handiwork. And His image is imprinted on our souls, for did not the Blessed Trinity say plainly at our creation, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" (Gen. i:26)? Accordingly, we must answer our Lord that the coin is God's.

II. But each one of us was a lost coin until our Saviour came with the lamp of the Gospel and the broom of His Cross, and swept the world to find us (St. Luke xv:8). By a double title, now, God ought to have me body and soul that He may lay me safely in His eternal treasury.

III. Two conditions I must fulfil, in order not to cheat my Divine Creator: (a) I must not offer Him a spurious Christianity, which appears well, but has no precious gold of love beneath its specious gilding. I cannot expect God to accept a counterfeit as a genuine coin from His Own mint of the Church. (b) I must give my body and soul into His Hand; for even a genuine coin hidden in a corner under the dust heap of mere natural interests, is as useless as so much base metal.

Monday after the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

Our Exceeding Great Reward. Read Gen. xv: 1-6

I. In our day it is regarded by many outside the Church as pusillanimous to work for a heavenly reward. But in both the Old Testament and the New it is our Saviour, Himself, Who urges us to seek after the very highest Wage. Thus He said to the Father of the Faithful: "I am Thy Shield

and Thy exceeding great Reward"; and many times He encouraged the apostles to endure and labor, by assuring them that their Reward in Heaven would be great (St. Matt. v:12). But our Lord's friends confess that though they should be entirely worsted in the argument, and compelled to admit that they are servile in the intention of their good works, they would nevertheless go on striving after their Compensation, for their Reward is the possession of Jesus Christ.

II. Let me cultivate a positive avarice for my stupendous Reward! St. Austin could never cease to grieve over the thirty years in which he had not been avaricious for It. "Too late," he lamented, "have I loved Thee, Thou Beauty, so ancient and so new." When at length this Beauty beamed forth It drove away his blindness, he says; It touched him and set his soul on fire.

III. The planet Sirius, which has not been clearly visible to astronomers until within recent years, is of extraordinary beauty, even as compared with the most glorious of the heavenly bodies. When it first swam into his sight, Sir John Herschel, accustomed as he was to the beauty of the stars, almost fainted with pleasure. But his joy was very poor and faint compared to that which I shall know when I see my King in His beauty. I will inflame my soul with desire for the "open vision" of His face. For "to know Jesus a little more, and then to love Him a little more, let the little be ever so little, is it not worth a long life of sadness and care?"

Tuesday after the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

God's Eagerness to Save Us. Read Ezek. xviii: 25-32

I. Those theologians who have striven with each other over the question: Which is the virtue that saves us, would confine God's intense desire for our salvation within limits far too narrow. For He will save by all means (cp. I. Cor. ix:22). He will lay hold of any virtue, if it be not entirely without the others, or divorced from faithful use of the sacraments. *Faith* will save us, since St. Paul says that we are saved by grace "through faith" (Eph. ii:8). *Love,* of course, is a sufficient virtue. "Because he hath set his love upon Me," our Lord declared through the Psalmist, "therefore, will I deliver him: I will set him on high; * * * with long life will I satisfy him and show him My salvation." The statement is plainly made, also, that "we are saved by *hope*" (Rom. viii:24). Again, it is said of *patience*: "In your patience ye shall win your souls" (St. Luke xxi:19, A. V. marg.). A wonderful promise is made to *meekness*: "He will beautify the meek with salvation." Even fear shall not miss its reward of eternal life, for God has promised, concerning those that fear Him, "they shall be mine, * * * and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

II. Faith in the blessed promises of God is, however, the mother of all other virtues. For it produces and nourishes them by bringing to the soul "the assurance of things hoped for, the evi-

dence of things not seen." The rays of an invisible star have been discovered by the spectroscope imprinted on the sensitive plate of the camera. The radiance of our invisible Lord, likewise, falls upon the sensitive Christian heart and is revealed to us by faith.

III. The Old Testament saints, with this faith, could endure, as seeing Him Who is invisible (Heb. xi:27). But I *know* Whom I have believed, as they did not. Surely I can be faithful unto death, as they were.

Wednesday after the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

The Sting Drawn from Death. Read 1 Cor. ii: 1-10

I. It is the thought of Heaven and the desire to depart and be with Jesus, which can overcome our natural repugnance to death, and make us cheerful over our inevitable departure from earth. The Holy Spirit dwelling in the soul which is Jesus' bride teaches her to say, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii:17,20). For He instructs her in those sure promises which God has made to His people. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," writes St. Paul, "neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

II. The experience of a boy born blind, and cured in his fourteenth year by the operation recently discovered, is remarkably analogous to our

attitude toward the unseen world and the glory of the revelation which is awaiting us. When he was told of the approaching operation on his eyes, the poor lad wept and protested, dreading the pain. He argued that there was no advantage in seeing, since he could find his way around the house at night better than people with eyes. Moreover, there could be nothing pleasanter than his blind walk about the garden. But how different it all was, when the surgeon's bandages were at last removed and he began to exercise his sight. Undreamed of beauties and joys sprang up everywhere to greet him. When he was sufficiently accustomed to light, he was taken to view a wide prospect. He was wild with delight, and insisted that he must have been given still another, new, sense of sight. Mysteries which had been insoluble to him in his blindness now became plain. For example, he had been unable to believe that his mother's face could be painted in miniature. What an allegory this all is of our trembling approach to the operation which shall open our eyes and the flood of eternal joy which shall all but overwhelm us when we see and understand clearly.

III. Let me, then, often practice bravely looking to my own death. Only, let me see the light of eternal beatitude shining upon it. I shall derive great benefit from this ancient Christian exercise. Indeed, I might rightly test all values as one of the saints used to do, by asking about each matter brought to my attention, "How does this look in the light of eternity?"

Thursday after the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

The Wedding of the Lamb. Read Rev. xxi : 1-5

I. Let us picture the temple of the New Jerusalem. Upon the High Altar is the Lamb as it had been slain; in the sanctuary are the saintly clergy, priests forever like their Lord; the choir is filled with holy Religious, and in the nave is so vast a multitude that only God Himself can number them. The service is beautified by the consummated vocations of all the redeemed. Poets, artists, craftsmen, laborers—every soul among them has been endowed at its creation to take some part in that eternal chorus of worship. Perhaps they found no fulfilment of their vocations during their life in the world, or they may have been ignored and despised by men, or cut short in the midst of their development. But now they have reached their full perfection, and they lay their mature fruits at the pierced Feet of One who appreciates each soul as His unique masterpiece.

II. The consummated union of our soul with Jesus is put under the metaphor of the Lamb's wedding. This is the perfected bond of holy marriage to which St. Paul was looking when he solemnized our espousals to Christ (2 Cor. xi:2). Our Bridegroom is 'far more gloriously fair than the children of men' (Psalm xlv:2), and is decked with light as with a garment. Plato so craved this union with Incarnate God that we find him adoring the visible world, in which he believed God to be immanent. Thus, he calls the universe "the only-begotten son of God." "It is an image of its Maker, a God man-

ifested to sense, the greatest and best, the most beautiful and perfect of all creatures, the one and only Universe." He was longing to come close to God, and so he was led to conceive of the Almighty as clothing Himself in the stars and worlds. He could not even imagine the Deity condescending to take our servant's nature, in order to love us with our own human heart.

III. The bride of this wedding is now without spot or wrinkle. She is clothed in white robes of holiness, washed in the Lamb's Blood. She is marked with the Father's "Name" in her forehead, for at last she has become like God. Her Lord sets her upon His Own Throne, and makes her ruler with Him over all His joys (St. Matthew xxiv:47). Last of all, she is crowned with the glory of perfect union with Jesus. The Lord of Hosts has become to her "a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty" (Isa. xxviii:5).

Friday after the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

Beatification of the Body (I), Read St. Matt. xiii: 36-43

I. Daniel prophesies that they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever (xii:3). If we look up at the skies on a clear night we shall see countless stars, ranging in brilliance from tiny specks in the firmament to great blazing planets. All are glorious in their different degrees, because all are filled with energy communicated to them by their Creator. They provide St. Paul as well as Daniel with a wonderful anal-

ogy for the resurrection body of the redeemed. Unlike in degree of glory as we shall be, all alike will be filled to the utmost of our capacity with eternal energy, which will preserve us in the immortal bloom of glorious youth and health.

II. Yet our Saviour has a still more wonderful description of our bodies' beauty after the General Resurrection. "Then," he said, "shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." His Own glory when He appeared on the Damascus road was *"above* the brightness of the sun"; and He "shall change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like the Body of His glory" (Phil. iii:21 A. V. marg.). From these sayings of the Scripture, we gain some conception of the radiance, only less than that which blinded St. Paul and stretched him in the dust, which God's saints shall have in their glorified bodies.

III. By the redundance of our spirits' bliss overflowing into our bodies, our senses shall be in some heavenly way beatified. Our Saviour promised that if we ask, we shall receive, so that our joy shall be *full* (St. John xvi:24). By this He meant that every lawful desire of our whole nature, physical and spiritual, is to be satisfied.

Saturday after the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

Beatification of the Body (II). Read Ps. lxxiii.

I. There is a word in the Hebrew of the Old Testament which is used of Enoch's translation to Heaven, and also of Elijah's (Gen. v: 24; 2 Kings

ii:9 f.). This almost technical term appears in the Psalmist's expression of hope for immortality, indicating that he also longed for something like bodily translation. 'Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel,' he said to God, 'and afterwards *take* me to glory.' Thus he expresses the natural craving of man for immortality both of body and soul. As St. Paul long afterwards phrased it, it is not that we would be unclothed, by the dissolution of flesh and spirit, "but clothed upon [with resurrection glory], that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (II. Cor. v:4). We shall, therefore, obtain an increase of eternal happiness when our redeemed soul receives its glorified material counterpart, at the Resurrection.

II. It is one of the most appealing promises of the Scripture that Christ will wipe away all tears from our eyes. When the shower of our sorrow, springing from both our natural griefs and our sins, has passed forever from our eyes, we shall behold our King upon His rainbow throne of mercy.

III. When once it comes home to us that we are to have such ineffable satisfaction of our natural desires, we can readily sacrifice the mere transient pleasures and interests of this life for the sake of gaining thereby a greater capacity for God's heavenly gifts. It was a wise suggestion which was made to Job, when he was told: "Then lay thou thy treasure in the dust, and the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks; and the Almighty shall be thy treasure, and precious silver unto thee" (Job. xxii:24 f.). I had rather receive "the riches of His grace" poured by the lavish

Hand of infinite love into my soul and body, than to possess all this passing world.

The Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

The Light of Glory. Read the Epistle for the Day.

I. St. Paul justly thanks God on behalf of the Church, because He "hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." While we are still members of the Church Militant we are exalted to the sphere of beatitude by the power of sanctifying grace. This is what St. Paul and St. John mean when they speak of our being born of God and becoming His sons, in Holy Baptism. But in order that we may see God a further gift than grace must be bestowed upon us, and this is the "light of glory." For God dwells "in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen nor can see." If it were not for the assurance which He has given us through the Psalmist we would despair of ever beholding the beauty of our God. But David says plainly (Ps. xxxvi:9), "With Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light."

II. The light of glory proceeds from the Father and from our Lord. St. John says that the heavenly "city [hath] no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God [doth] lighten it and the Lamb is the Light thereof." As in the light of the sun all things become light, so shall we be enveloped and illuminated by the glory flowing out to us from the throne of the Blessed Trinity.

III. In Heaven we shall retain our identity as individuals only that we may love and worship God in the unique way of our peculiar individuality, and receive from Him the flood of His overflowing love. A diamond faultlessly cut and polished becomes invisible when immersed in crystal pure water, yet it is not changed into the liquid. When God shall "be All in all," we in a similar way will be immersed in His light and filled with it, but shall still be the subjects and objects of divine charity.

Monday after the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

Beatification of Our Mind (I). Read 1 Cor. xiii: 8-13

I. How many questions about the physical and spiritual spheres must always remain unanswered in this present life! "What I do," our Lord has mercifully explained to us, "thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter" (St. John xiii:7). St. Paul, enlarging upon this statement of our Saviour, admits that "We know in part" only, now. But he assures us that "when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."

II. The intellectual pleasure of the redeemed will, therefore, be perfect. The new heaven and earth will display the wonders of their Artificer's divine wisdom. Nor will there be any surfeit of our delight in the beauties of the universe, nor shall these ever come to an end. For Solomon was taught to declare concerning God: "He hath made everything beautiful in its time; also He hath set

eternity in their heart, yet so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end" (Eccles. iii:11, A. V. marg.).

III. If we have been tempted to envy the keen pleasure of a Pasteur in his scientific discoveries, let us realize that by giving our minds to God's service according to our lesser ability, we shall obtain from Him endless knowledge of all the beautiful secrets now locked in the treasury of the universe. And God shall ravish our ears with harmonies infinitely sweeter than any which His Holy Spirit has taught to human composers. It is related that Wagner was disappointed with Parsifal. His soul craved the music of the spheres and would not be satisfied with any less perfect. I will give my mind first of all to gain a deeper knowledge of God, for according as I am able to understand His thoughts I shall know all truth.

Tuesday after the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

Beatification of Our Spirit (I). Read Isa liv: 5-10

I. In His wise care for our spiritual development, Christ disciplines us time after time, perhaps long and severely, with spiritual desolation. But, almost playfully, He assures us that He will make up to us for these sufferings by endless consolations in Heaven. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee," are His loving words, "but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee."

II. The order and beauty of the angels arrayed in their nine choirs, will be another great happiness to our perfected souls. When Richard Hooker lay dying, he fell, one day, into deep thought. Upon being asked by a visiting friend what so greatly interested him, he answered that he was meditating "on the number and nature of the angels, and on their blessed obedience and order." I shall be greatly delighted also, by the glory of all the saints who will be nearer the Throne than I; for in the perfected communion of saints I shall rejoice over the closer union of another soul with my Lord, and his larger measure of the Beatific Vision, as if these unspeakable rewards had been given to me.

III. Perhaps the most precious of our spiritual joys in Heaven will be our privilege of joining with those who rest not day or night from God's perfect service. Two monks were once walking in the convent garden with a young novice. They were discussing the promises in the Scriptures of the blessings they would have in Heaven, and each had told which of these he esteemed the most. Presently they turned to the novice and asked him what he thought would contribute most to his happiness in Heaven. The boy answered: "That which is promised when the Scriptures say, 'His servants shall serve Him.'" Like this young man, Thomas A' Kempis, I will look forward to obtaining unspeakable happiness from the worship of my Lord God, in which I shall no longer flag or faint.

Wednesday after the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

Beatification of Our Spirit (II). Read Rev. x: 1-6

I. In my present time of probation I must often practice Christian agnosticism as to the dispensations of Providence. But I shall not always be ignorant of the ways in which God has made all things work together for my good. Bishop Ullathorne thus comments on St. Paul's words, "Then shall I know, even as I am known:" "The beatified soul sees the whole of that precious chain of divine lights, graces, inspirations, encouragements in trial, pardon after failure, consolation and strength, that extends over her mortal life and has brought her on her way to God. She sees how God went before her preparing her way, and with her to support her in the way, and followed her to make the way secure; afflicting her but to heal, striking her to humble her, abasing but to exalt her."

II. Both St. Paul (2 Cor. xii:4) and St. John were translated to Heaven and stood for a brief space before the throne of our Lord. But the former Apostle tells us that the things he saw were such as it would not be possible for him to describe; and the latter was required to seal up the revelations of the Angel, Who is really identical with Christ. The Scriptures, therefore, tell us of only a part of God's glory and love. The best is yet to be disclosed to Christian eyes.

III. God encourages me in His written word, to claim Him in a special way as my own. He is to be *my* Lord and *my* God because, while perhaps

I shall be only just admitted within the Gates of Pearl, He is my Father and He will give Himself to me as unreservedly as if He had no other children.

Thursday after the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

Intuitive Love of God's Essence. Read Ps. cxxx.

I. We shall see the very Being and Nature of God in the Beatific Vision, and the faculty by which we shall thus know God immediately, directly, without the intervention of anything created, is our intuition. A scene from the life of two great saints will help us to understand how this is. St. Austin and St. Monica sat one beautiful evening at Ostia, looking out over their garden and beyond over the lovely bay. The mother and son were speaking of Heaven and God, and seeking to know "of what nature that eternal life of the saints would be, which eye hath not seen or ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man." Then they reasoned upward from the beautiful scene before them, allowing natural things only to say: "We created not ourselves, but were created by Him who abideth forever." After that they silenced both the eloquent landscape and their own consciousness of self. Augustine says as to what followed: "While we were straining after heavenly wisdom we lightly touched [God] with the whole effort of our hearts." This was the intuitive apprehension of the Divine Essence to Which for an instant they had attained. "If this [touch] could be sustained," St. Austin concludes, "and other visions withdraw,

and this one ravish and absorb and envelope its beholder * * * so that life might be like that one moment of knowledge, * * * were not this just what is meant by 'Enter into the joy of thy Lord?'"

II. This soul of mine was endowed with the gift of intuition just in order that it might know God in this immediate way. And, with fervent craving, it "watcheth for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning."

III. Let me never forget that this same activity of my intellect through which I am to behold the Divine Nature Itself is also my intuition of the moral law, that is, my conscience. There is, therefore, a vital connection between my goodness in this life and my hope of knowing God in the next.

Friday after the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

Receiving the Likeness of Jesus. Read Ps. xvii.

I. The great Apostle of the Gentiles was happy, even on the eve of his decapitation, in the certainty that his gray head so soon to fall beneath the executioner's sword would receive from the Righteous Judge a crown of righteousness (2 St. Tim. iv:8). And well might Paul rejoice over the reward he was about to receive for fighting valiantly on behalf of the Faith, since the crown of a saint is his likeness to Christ. "We shall be like Him," St. John promises us. And David knew well that when he woke up from the sleep of death and found himself bearing a likeness to his Saviour, He would "be satisfied with it."

II. The Scriptures indicate that the blessed ones in Heaven see God only through the veil of Jesus' Manhood, and this will be true until after the General Judgment. St. Bernard points out that our Lord now 'tabernacles *over*' the saints (Rev. vii: 15); but after the final consummation of their perfection, it is said that He will 'tabernacle *with* them' (Rev. xxi:3). Moreover, the Church Triumphant is gathered in the heavenly temple now, while there will be no temple after the General Resurrection, "for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb" shall then be the Temple of 'the city of God.' It seems a right inference from these facts that an age-long process of preparation lasting until the very end of the world is necessary to prepare human souls for the full, unveiled vision of God. How great then must be the majesty and how overpowering the loveliness of the Divine Nature!

III. We know that Jesus rejoices in the presence of the holy angels over one sinner who has just repented. What then must be His joy over a soul now actually entering Heaven, its long course of purification at last finished. The wonderful smile with which He will greet me when I come bearing His likeness, would, if it were all, make the joy of Heaven infinite.

Saturday after the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

Eternity. Read St. John xiv: 1-6

I. Time, after the Resurrection, shall be done away and eternity shall begin. St. Theresa, when in rapture, could not tell whether a moment only

had passed or a very long while, because time had ceased to exist for her while she was rapt in contemplation of God's glorious Nature.

II. Though we shall have an eternity in which to learn one after another the beauties of God's wisdom and love, we shall never exhaust the infinite riches of His Being. On the one hand we shall be completely satisfied, as it is written, "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness" (and *Christ* is our Righteousness), "for they shall be filled." On the other hand our desire to discover new splendors of divine perfection shall never be satiated. "He that drinketh Me," declares the Divine Wisdom, "shall thirst again."

III. When our Lord told us about the "many mansions" of His Father's house, he used a word which meant literally the small inns along the post-roads of the Empire. He suggested, therefore, that just as the traveler got refreshment at the tavern and then continued on his way, so we shall be constantly delighted and stimulated by fresh discoveries of God's glorious beauties, and at the same time eager to journey on into the "Land of far distances" (Isa. xxxiii:17, R. V. marg.), the infinite perfections of the Godhead.

The Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

Being Multiplied for Christ's Service. Read Heb. vi: 13-18

I. It is essential to the life of our own souls that we should be multiplying our graces and our good works. For, according to the law of spiritual energy, it is impossible for life to remain station-

ary, so that we must make progress or we will retrograde. Others' souls, also, we must strengthen, as the lad in to-day's Gospel fed, not himself only, but many thousand lay people and twelve bishops. Nay, we must satisfy our Lord's Own hunger by the sweet charity which we manifest in our prayer-life and our active service. We must, therefore, as we approach the beginning of another Church Year, look over our endowment of virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, and see which of them require to be made productive.

II. With so tremendous an obligation upon me, I draw great comfort from the wonderful fact that God has sworn to increase my spiritual efficiency. For He, "being minded more abundantly to show unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath." And "the promise" was as follows: "Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."

III. Our Saviour might have fed the multitude by calling down a rain of manna from Heaven; or He could, by one act of will, have filled the whole spot where they were assembled with great piles of loaves and fishes. But, instead of this, He took into His Hands the luncheon of the little lad and broke the five loaves and two fishes for the people, as if He had possessed no other means in the world of satisfying them. But always there appeared more of the food in the place of that which was distributed. Following the principle of effectiveness He thus demonstrated, I need only use my endowment to the full and it will prove sufficient for Christ's needs; "for whosoever hath," *in practical use,* "to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance;

but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath," in mere potential, idle possession.

Monday after the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

Development Out of Our Limitations. Read 1 Cor. i: 23-31

I. My limitations are no bar to my becoming incalculably useful to Christ. St. Paul points us to God's "foolishness" and "weakness" on the Cross, and reminds us that in these qualities Jesus was wiser and stronger than men. So it has proved. For out of the unspeakably narrow limitations under which the Crucified labored has grown the world-wide efficiency of His Mystical Body, the Catholic Church. Therefore, we can readily believe that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are."

II. Nature has a very wonderful parable by which she would teach me a great lesson about the way to transcend my own limitations. The tree which is among her strongest in its full development begins life so weak that its top can be bent over and made to touch the earth. But by the working of the invisible life within it this hickory sapling puts on ring outside of ring until it becomes so tough and strong that it can be absolutely

relied upon neither to bend nor break. In this same way a soul, which is at first very negative, may, by using the energy of the invisible life-principle within it, take on wider and wider spheres of effectiveness in the Kingdom.

III. It was by the developing power of grace that the apostles grew out of their Jewish limitations so marvelously. They began their ministry hampered by many of the prejudices of their race and time. But they came to have a capacity for a religion so absolutely transcending national limits and so spiritual that it was centuries beyond their age. And God is able to develop me from being like the poor fishermen, or the publican, into one who does all things well.

Tuesday after the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

Gathering Up the Fragments. Read Zech. iv : 1-10

I. As careful business men at the end of the secular year look back and take stock, in order that they may gather up the odds and ends and cut off all waste, so I ought to gather up my broken resolutions and my still unprofitable virtues, natural or infused. Therefore, Mother Church brings before me this week that miracle of our Lord wherein He showed in the most instructive way His careful economy of small values. St. Philip entirely overlooked the little boy's luncheon. St. Andrew saw it and mentioned it. But it was only our Lord Who considered it sufficiently worth while for him to take it and use it to the full.

II. For God never wastes anything. Not a "chip" of energy in the whole universe is ever lost. Apparently the present manifestations of force will be changed into the new heaven and earth and so have eternal existence. And He, the perfect Artist, appreciates and values every smallest beauty in His creatures. There is an old legend that the body of a vagrant dog was lying one day in a street of Jerusalem. Each passer-by had some jesting or sneering remark to make about it, except One, Who said, "His teeth are like pearls." That was Jesus Christ. How precious, then, to Him must be the first tiny trace of holiness in my soul? He will not 'despise my day of small things.'

III. There is great danger involved in any part of my nature remaining unclaimed by Christ. For behind that fag-end of myself is the terrible force of a free will. I would not consider a piece of live wire flying loose immaterial. Yet that could only destroy bodies, whereas my unrestrained bit of self would quickly prove fatal to immortal souls. Therefore the Master shall gather up those ominous fragments of my nature into His own keeping.

Wednesday after the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

Faithfulness in Little Things. Read St. Luke xvi: 9-13

I. It is the way of human pride to despise little things. But our Lord warns us that if we are not faithful in little, we would not be in much; if we are unfaithful in dealing with the unrighteous mammon, that is, money and other temporal goods,

we can never receive the true riches, and being found careless in that which is Another Man's, since it belongs to Jesus Christ, the righteous Judge will not give us the reward of grace for ourselves. The old Fathers of the desert relate that a young Religious, who was notably negligent about the details of his rule, used to plan the way he would meet martyrdom. But one day some Mohammedans came upon him and by a few frowns and blows so frightened him that he apostatized. After that, he returned to his laura, humbly and penitently sought absolution, and henceforth knew that the way to become faithful in great matters is to begin by attention to those of seemingly insignificant importance.

II. The deterioration of devout people is not ordinarily by any sudden spiritual disaster. It almost invariably begins with a lessening of care, or zeal, in some minor particular of one's rule. But to yield means to cause the beginning of an absolutely fatal process of disintegration. "He that despiseth small things," the Wise Man teaches, "shall fall by little and little" (Ecclus. xix:1). And it is most difficult to restore a soul from the hard indifference into which it thus declines, because all God's gifts and graces have already been used with it, and no new stimulus for it remains.

III. Opposite to this dark picture, however, is the promise of our merciful Lord to those who strive to perform their little duties well. "Well, thou good servant," is His loving commendation to every one of those souls, "because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over [many] cities" (St. Luke xix:17). It is, therefore,

in proportion as I conserve little opportunities, develop little new beginnings of Christian virtue, and continue steadfastly in keeping my resolutions against little sins, that I shall share with my Lord God in His power and glory.

Thursday after the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

Be Ye Thankful. Read Ps. lxv.

I. It has ever been a tendency of human unbelief to ascribe all things to fate. The picture which is suggested to us by this theory is that of a monstrous hand gripping a pigmy man between its fingers. He thinks himself free, while in reality his entire fortune is predetermined by an immutable, blind force. But Aurelius was right, when he said, "Recall the alternative and argue thus: either Providence or atoms rule the Universe." If God be not the Power behind things, mere chance combinations of matter must govern them, and chance is as unscientific as it is unchristian. The Psalmist has the right of it. Even our temporal blessings come from the hand of our personal God. It is He Who watches over every stage of the harvest, from the time when He provides the seed corn, and waters the newly-made ridges of the field, until He crowns the year with His goodness. I, like the little hills, shall this day be "girded with joy" (A. V. marg.), and, like the valleys, I shall sing my joyous praise of Divine Providence.

II. But when I consider Him, who is the River of God, full of the water of grace for my soul, how

is my thanksgiving increased. The greatness of my Saviour's mercy appears best if I set it against the background of human ingratitude. St. Jerome writes that our Lord rose from the grave to reward the race which had crucified Him. And He does this, by "giving them a crown of gold for a crown of thorns; by bestowing on them the manna of His glorious Body for the gall which they presented to Him that He might eat; by refreshing them with the Water of the River of Life instead of the vinegar that they held to His dying lips; by writing their names in the Book of Life, whereas His was only written by them as the title of His accusation on the cross."

III. In a mediæval orphanage of Munich it was the practice to paint the portrait of each ragged urchin as he was received, and to give this picture to the graduate of the school that it might, all his life, help him to be grateful to our Lord. For he would have vividly before him the evidence of the transformation from his first poverty and squalor which Jesus' love had effected in his life. I must often recollect that I was a filthy foundling cast on God's charity whom He cleansed with His Blood and received into His Own household (Eph. ii:19).

Friday after the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

The Christian Pilgrimage. Read Ps. lxxxiv: 5-11

I. "Blessed," the Psalmist exclaims to God, "is the man whose strength is in Thee." And rightly does he say this, for such a soul commands the in-

finite power of the Almighty. But then immediately the sacred writer gives us the supplementary condition of this blessedness which man must fulfil. For he says that the blessed person is one "in whose heart are the ways to the sanctuary," or, if we adopt the equivalent interpretation, "highways to Zion." The author of this Psalm, as we are told by its title, was a "son of Korah," or a server in the temple, on Mount Zion. He knew the fortitude and virtue of those who frequented even that Old Testament sanctuary. I will let him teach me to seek the benediction of my Lord at the altar of reservation, and His mighty strength in Holy Communion.

II. Continuing, the sacred singer praises those who "passing through the valley of weeping make it a place of springs" (R. V.). In the pilgrimage of earnest Christians, even "The Valley of the Shadow of Death" is full of refreshing fountains. For misfortunes and griefs only serve to drive them to the sanctuary where are all the fresh springs of God. And "the early rain covereth it with blessings," since the grace received in that morning hour before the altar is replete with benedictions for the whole long day of dusty travel.

III. "They go from strength to strength," or "virtue to virtue," chants this son of Korah, "and everyone of them appeareth unto God in Zion." The dark Valley of Weeping has an outlet into a land of eternal sunlight. The "Zion" of the Old Testament saint was the earthly counterpart of that Heaven which he only dimly glimpsed. But I know that I shall emerge from the valley to appear before my Lord God, no longer shrouded by the veil of the sanctuary, but reigning before me gloriously.

Saturday after the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

The Mighty God. Read Job xl: 9-14

I. God's challenge to Job is repeated, through Holy Scripture, to my soul: "Hast thou an arm like God? * * * Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency, and array thyself with glory and beauty. Pour forth the overflowings of thine anger, and look upon everyone that is proud and abase him, * * * then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee."

II. Our Almighty Father is ready to use His infinite power to accomplish even a small kindness for us. He sent His angel to roll away the "very great" stone from the mouth of our Lord's grave, simply because it would have been too heavy for the women to move. Yet he is more economical in expending force than we expect Him to be, very often. The women, in their eager desire to possess their Lord's Body, would have had the stone 'rolled clear away' from before the door of the sepulcher, as the Greek word indicates. But in fact the angel 'rolled it a little distance away' from the opening (cp. St. Mark xvi:3 f.). I must be prepared to have my God do just enough, so that only by taking full advantage of His help can I make the advance in the spiritual life which He indicates to me.

III. It is by a mighty love of my Saviour that I am brought into vital union with Him through my prayers and sacraments. "Let them that love Him," was the song of God's ancient warriors, "be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might" (Judges v: 31, R. V.). But my devotion must become very

great if it is to bring me so much strength as this. St. Francis de Sales pointed out that a little fire is extinguished by a wind, which only serves to fan a great, consuming, mounting flame. So it is, that temptation ought only kindle the blaze of my love for Him Who is attacked through me.

Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Loyalty to Jesus. Read St. Matt. xi: 7-15

I. The saint of this day "did no miracle." His holy life was his only "sign" and "wonder." Therefore, it seems more practicable for such as I, a soul without extraordinary gifts, to imitate him. For I, also, may have the "Spirit and power" to work the miracle of saintliness. Indeed I am that "least" soul in the kingdom of Heaven which is greater than this greatest of the prophets (St. Matt. xi:11). For by incorporation into Christ through my baptism, I am "in the Lord" and am made a partaker of the Divine Nature. The holy Baptist was the "forerunner" of the Son of God, but I am a member "of His Body, of His Flesh and of His Bones" (Eph. v:30). And how much of potential holiness does this union with Omnipotent Love imply!

II. But how great then is my disloyalty if ever I am a "reed shaken with the wind," rustling in response to the gales of unbelief and sinfulness which spring from the paganism around me! And what shame is mine if I, a member of the Crucified, wear the "soft clothing" of worldliness which is the livery of the "Prince of this world!" It was out of "kings' houses," the palaces of the worldly

high-priests and the man-fearing governor, that the bands went which crucified Christ.

III. The holy Baptist was the "friend of the Bridegroom." This proud title, taken from the nomenclature of Jewish weddings, distinguished the Forerunner from the "children of the bride-chamber," the guests of a wedding, and set him apart as our Lord's friend of friends. I, also, would yield to none in devotion to Jesus. Nay, I would be His faithful bride, since I am one flesh with Him, and one Spirit (I Cor. vi:17). Let me then live over St. John's desert life, that I may be trained in his loyalty. This will mean constant self-denials. But also I would practice creating a spiritual desert around myself, detaching myself in thought from my whole environment, that I may "think all the world" of Jesus.

St. Peter's Day

Development Through Christ. Read St. Matt. xvi: 13-20

I. When St. Andrew brought his brother to our Lord we are told that "Jesus beheld him," and said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a Stone" (St. John i:42). In this disciple Christ saw the natural man with his inherent faults. But also He discerned the elements of the character into which afterward Simon would be transformed. Bishop Westcott thus paraphrases Jesus' words, "I know thee and what thou art from thy birth till thy present coming to me. I know what I will make of thee in thy following,

for My kingdom." Always afterward our Lord called him "Simon" when the unregenerate man in the apostle was uppermost, and "Peter" or "Cephas" when there appeared some saintly attribute taking shape within him. Thus he was "Simon" before his betrayal of Christ (St. Luke xxii:31), and at his restoration to the apostolate (St. John xxi:15). But he was "Peter" at the great confession of Jesus' Deity. May my Lord work out in me all that He desires me to become.

II. My conception of Christ will develop through my personal fellowship with Him. St. Peter was prepared for his great confession by the revelation of the majesty and power which he beheld in Christ as he journeyed with Him by day and slept at His side at night. The Apostle beheld Him walk upon the sea and obtain instant obedience from the winds and waves. On the Mount of Transfiguration he had seen the saints worshipping Jesus. Slowly the idea that his Master must be the Christ and the Son of God grew upon him until it ripened into a conviction. And ultimately my realization of Christ as my Saviour and God will come through deepening spiritual experience of His Personal fellowship.

III. Christ can develop in me zeal and skill. Simon Peter, the fisher in the Lake of Galilee, was a sinful man, not worthy, himself, to remain in his Lord's Presence. But he followed Christ and so was *made* by Jesus' fellowship and grace a "fisher of men." As, on the day of his conversion, he brought a great draught of fishes to shore, so in after years he brought countless souls from

the restless waters of this world to the feet of Christ.

St. James's Day

A Thunderer of Charity. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. All of us, probably, have our times of vehement desire, or strong, determined ambition for some seeming gain. At such moments we are like the Boanerges, those Sons of Thunder, who sought from our Lord the places of honor at His Right Hand and His Left in His glory. They seem to have been of the most ardent, ambitious temperament. No dizzy height of power and splendor appeared inaccessible to their climbing. Now our Lord did not reject and rebuke their lofty aspiration. He did not annihilate the thunder of their disposition, but rather consecrated it to His Own service. So it is with us that a determined will, a masterful temperament, or a powerful ambition ought never to be regarded as a thing altogether evil. It is raw material out of which saintliness may be made.

II. For why was it that St. James was selected out of all the Twelve to be killed with the sword? Were not the other eleven preaching the Gospel as uncompromisingly as he? And the Jews seem to have been widely and noticeably demonstrative in their pleasure when he was slain. Probably they especially resented St. James's preaching because he had become a thunderer of God's charity for all the world, Jewish and Gentile alike.

III. In a true sense the Boanerges did at length attain to the places on the Right and Left of their

Lord in His glory. For one of them was the first of the apostles to drink of the cup of His Passion, and through martyrdom to join Him in Heaven. The other was the last of the whole apostolic band to overcome and go to sit with Him on His throne, thus completing the circle of the Twelve around Him. It was in this way that the seats of honor at their Lord's side in His kingdom were "prepared" for the two apostles. I cannot tell what is the true prize after which my stronger natural qualities are blindly reaching. But I know that only as I give them up to Christ's guidance and consecration can I hope to attain that loftiest of all successes after which the human soul was created to strive.

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Seeking Christ's Kingdom Above All. Read St. Mark ix : 1-8

I. Our Lord had brought His apostles into the mountains that He might reconcile them to His Passion. And having withdrawn to a secluded cliff, with the three most receptive ones, leaders of the little band, He there allowed the divine glory of His Person for a short time to irradiate His Manhood. Two saints appeared from heaven in their lesser glory. Probably this was the proximate fulfilment of our Lord's promise: "Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power." He meant to reconcile His Apostles to the loss of the earthly kingdom by showing them that which they would gain by their passion.

II. Therefore, "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them." No royal robes of human making could be so dazzlingly beautiful with light as these had become. And the three apostles were dazed and overwhelmed by the very happiness they received from the ravishing glory of Christ and His Saints. "But oh!" says Venerable Bede, "how great must be the happiness of forever enjoying the beatific vision of the Godhead among the choirs of angels, if only the transfigured Humanity of Christ, seen for an instant, and fellowship with two Saints delighted souls so greatly!"

III. The tabernacles of boughs which St. Peter would have provided our Lord and Moses and Elijah represent the poverty of all earthly greatness and wealth. But in Heaven the redeemed of the Lord will be caught up into the flood of divine light proceeding from the Godhead, just as, on the Mount of Transfiguration, the "luminous cloud of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," as Origen rightly called it, enveloped the three apostles. How poor and mean, then, are the things which so easily draw me away from the contemplation of my eternal inheritance. Shall I not be content, if I receive naught but a cross now, since I know that through my passion I shall pass to immortality so unspeakably blessed?

St. Bartholomew's Day

Love of Obscurity. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. The saint of this day was thought by St. Jerome to have been the only one of the Twelve who was of noble birth. Yet he became the most retiring and obscure of the apostles. When he was called, he was seated in a shady spot of his private garden in the tiny provincial town of Cana (St. John xxi:2). He seems to have lived as a retiring student until his call to the apostolate, and after that to have been, with the exception of Simon Zelotes, the most silent member of the apostolic band.

II. Yet St. Bartholomew, or Nathanael, had the supreme honor and happiness of being the intimate, familiar friend of God Incarnate. Probably it was his home from which Jesus went forth to work His first glorious miracle at Cana. His very name and identity are involved in some doubt, for a few commentators have questioned whether Bartholomew and Nathanael are the same person. But does this obscurity lessen his happiness, or his glory, in Heaven, now?

III. There is a parable which is meant to make us love a retired and inconspicuous life. A sunny pool once marveled over the liking for its shady dell which was displayed by the nearby brook. Why should it not come forth from beneath the overhanging branches, pondered the pool, and reflect the sunbeams from its bosom, to the wonder and admiration of the passer-by? But in the hot drought of midsummer the sunny pool was dried up, while the shady brook ran happily on its way to the sea. So it is that I shall make my journey

to the boundless ocean of eternal life all the more safely if my humility is not exposed to the glare of the world's notice.

St. Matthew's Day

Servants of Jesus. Read the Gospel for the Day.

I. There was a special finality about Levi's surrender of all earthly possessions, in order that he might serve our Lord. For the fishermen could return to their nets, as they did, indeed, very readily, at least once after they were called to follow Christ (St. John xxi:3). But the counting-house stool of Matthew was speedily occupied by another publican eager for a position at this port on the great caravan route at which such rich gains were to be made by farming the taxes. Yet he made his complete act of self-devotion with such happy willingness, that it seemed to him fitting to celebrate it by giving a great banquet to his friends. This dear saint shall teach me to make my sacrifices with holy joy.

II. Henceforth the luxurious publican of aforetime was required to rise early and keep long vigils with his Master. He was given nothing but the broken food, when he had been fasting for two days, and even the "fragments" fell to his lot only after he had fed the multitude. What blessed training Christ gives to His servants in the divine science of counting themselves last! We are, indeed, directed to be as our Master, Who was among us as he that serveth. Therefore, we are servants of the Servant of God and man. But a servant's

duty is to open the door for his master, and I perform this when I am allowed to open to Him some heart which has long been excluding Him.

III. The hands of Levi the publican had been given up to gathering for himself coins stamped with the image of Caesar, who speedily proved himself to be the enemy of Christ's Church. But the hands of St. Matthew the Apostle were devoted to gathering for God souls stamped with His image. Now I have one very notable opportunity to share in this service of the saint. When I am called to assist even in the remote preparation of a Christian for death I will devote myself prayerfully and with deep earnestness to the immortal soul of my friend. I will remember that the body is dust and will return to the earth, but "the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it" (Eccles. xii:7).

St. Michael and All Angels' Day

The Angels Teaching Us Worship and Service.

Read Heb. i: 7-14

I. God made His angels very like Himself. Thus they are pure spirits, without any corporal part. And as if to indicate how similar their character is to His Own, He named them after Himself. For *Raphael* means "The Healing of God"; *Gabriel,* "The Might of God"; *Michael,* "Who is Like God." And we learn to love God better as we study the adumbration of His beauty in the holy angels.

II. The life of these blessed servants of God is half-contemplative, half-active. "Are they not,"

St. Paul asks, "all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Before God's altar-throne they offer (Rev. viii:3) the sacrifice of our prayers. But then straightway they go forth into the world on missions of comfort and counsel to the souls of men. I must beware of allowing my prayer-life to monopolize me, unless I am given the special vocation of a contemplative life. On the other hand, social service must never bulk so large that I give up my meditation and intercessions. My ministry to others must draw its inspiration and power from my half-hour before the Heavenly Throne in the early morning.

III. With what ardor God inspires His blessed hosts in all they do for Him and for men's souls. He "maketh His angels winds," writes the Apostle, "and His ministers a flame of fire." These sons of God are whirlwinds of charity in their service to men, and furnaces of love in their worship of their Maker. How much more ought I love and serve God, seeing that He is not only my Creator, but my Saviour by His Cross and Passion!

St. Luke's Day

Unobtrusiveness. Read Col. iv: 14; 2 Tim. iv: 8-11

I. One who is carefully reading the Acts of the Apostles will, now and again, be struck by the change of pronoun from the third person to the first person plural. This is the only sign St. Luke gives in his own book of the fact that at these points in St. Paul's journey he joined the Apostle

(cp. xvi:10; xx:5). There are not wanting signs that these sudden appearances of St. Luke in the Apostle's company coincided with attacks of the latter's malady. Thus, without noise or display, the saintly physician came just when he was needed, setting me an example of the way in which I ought to perform my works of corporal mercy.

II. The Greek of St. Paul's title for his companion is very tender. He calls St. Luke "the physician, the beloved one." Elsewhere he declares that this is "the brother whose praise in the Gospel is spread through all the churches" (2 Cor. viii:18, A. V. marg.), meaning thereby that our saint was being praised throughout the Church for his preaching of the Gospel. Yet we would never have known that St. Luke attained any fame as an evangelist, had we depended upon his mentioning the fact.

III. There is a vivid contrast between St. Luke and Demas, which indicates how steadfast unobtrusive people are likely to be in contrast with showy ones. For the two disciples are mentioned together in the Epistle to the Colossians, written during St. Paul's first captivity; but when he was confined the second time, under the ban of Caesar's dire wrath, Demas loved this present world too much. Only Luke was with him as he faced his martyrdom. If I would be faithful unto death to my friends I must acquire some of the quiet, humble devotion which characterized beloved Luke.

Saints Simon and Jude's Day

The Mortification of Our Natural Self. Read St. Jude 1-5

I. Simon the Cananite is only a name to us, except that we learn from Catholic tradition about his martyr's death. His figure is half-hidden in the twilight of the Gospel history. But there is another Simon among the Twelve, called Cephas, the prince of the apostles during the three years of our Lord's ministry, whose figure stands out in bold relief in the sacred narrative. The one Simon must have mortified himself habitually, at least in speech, for not one word of his is recorded. The other was Satan's special mark, because of the very prominence involved in his position as a leader. Which is better, for me with my small measure of strength, to have my lot with Simon the silent apostle, or with Simon who more than once fell into error by impulsive speech?

II. Even St. Simon's title, such as it was, has been misspelled in a way calculated to do violence to his deepest natural feelings. "Cananite" meant a "Zealot," that is, one belonging to a patriotic band of devoted Jews whose object was to free Israel from the Roman yoke. But "Canaanite" meant a member of the depraved heathen people whom the Jews had driven away to the north of Palestine. Thus the tenderest and strongest native enthusiasm of our saint's whole life has been mortified.

III. St. Jude also, with whom St. Simon has from early times been associated, helps to teach us the value of mortifying our natural self. He was

the Lord's brother, yet he never claimed any prerogative because of his special relationship to God Incarnate. And his pseudonyms, Thaddaeus and Lebbaeus, mark the spiritual result of his self-suppression. For, taken together, they mean that he had the tender heart of a woman. Toward the enemies of Christ he was uncompromisingly severe, but toward the helpless, Christians and penitents he showed a positively feminine love and sympathy. If I crucify my weak, sentimental self, I shall make it possible for the true strength and charity of Christ to develop within me.

All Saints' Day

God's Love for His Saints. Read Acts xxvii: 20-37

I. Our Lord Himself would teach us the honor which His Father pays to the saints. "If any man serve Me," he said, "him will My Father honor." God is, therefore, gracious to the whole company of Jesus' perfected friends. Each member of the heavenly company receives such a measure of His favor as the holiness of that member's life has merited. It seems that the martyrs receive from the Father especial love and blessing, since it is said in the Scriptures, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Ps. cxvi: 15).

II. It is an ancient Catholic custom, based upon God's written Word, to plead the merits of the saints. Thus the writer of Psalm 132 pleaded with God in these words: "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed" (*v.* 10). Solomon, also, sought God's special bless-

ing upon the newly-built temple by reminding Him of David's piety. "O, Lord God," he prayed, "turn not away the face of Thine Anointed; remember the good deeds of David Thy servant" (2 Chron. vi:42, R. V. marg.). And if St. Paul could rightly say that the unbelieving Jews were beloved of God for the "fathers' sakes" (Rom. xi:28), that is, for the merits of the Old Testament saints, how much more does He favor us when we plead before Him the holy lives of Christian confessors and martyrs.

III. As we read the episode of St. Paul's shipwreck it becomes clear that God gave him all the souls in the ship with him for the sake of his fasting and prayers. Surely now that the great Apostle has perfected his life of penance and service to Christ by his martyrdom, we ought confidently to believe that he pleads for us, his fellow voyagers in the Church, as it takes its way over the turbulent waves of the world.

Tuesday after the First Sunday in Advent

The Lord is at Hand. Read Rev. xx: 1-6

I. St. John's conception throughout the Book of Revelation is that Christ is reigning in the midst of the Church, in vital, proximate, relation to Christians on earth as well as to those in heaven. In this, he has simply expressed, in apocalyptic phraseology, the common thought of the Apostolic Church. Moreover it followed naturally from the conviction of Christ's Presence with the Church Militant, that the apostles expected Him simply to "reveal" Himself at the second Advent. Thus, St.

Paul tells us (1 Cor. i:7) that we are to wait "for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." I must think of Him as already reigning among His saints on earth, ready to be manifested when the foreordained instant arrives.

II. Ultimately, it is our Lord Himself Who teaches us constantly to expect His revelation of Himself. 'Know ye,' He taught the apostles, 'that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand, aye, hath one foot already on the threshold of your doors' (St. Mark xiii:29). Following His lead, St. James soon after wrote: "The Judge standeth before the door" (v. 9). St. Paul, indeed, shows us that this same thought had become a Christian watchword. For his "Maran atha" (1 Cor. xvi:22) is Aranaic for "our Lord cometh," or literally, *"is come."*

III. I will, then, place myself entirely under the rule of my Divine King, and take every occasion to commit myself absolutely to His allegiance Once a valiant servant of His, Sir Thomas More, when his wicked earthly king was striving to drive him from his loyalty to the Heavenly One, felt that he might be sorely tempted to yield. But, after a conference with his persecutors, he was observed to be very merry and, being asked the reason for his good spirits, answered: "I rejoice that I have given the devil a foul fall, and that with those lords I have gone so far as without great shame I would never go back again." Let my every act be such as will set me irrevocably under Jesus' rule.

Tuesday after the Fourth Sunday in Advent

Our Heavenly Guide. Read Rev. xix: 11-16

I. Perhaps the greatest and best loved conqueror of all secular history was Napoleon. Yet when he was leading his army back from Russia, and it was suffering fearfully from hunger and cold, he left it and hurried on to Paris, where he would be warm and well-fed. It was precisely the opposite with the Captain of our Salvation. For he was rich in every joy of Heaven, yet He leaped down into the mid-winter snow to lead His army and give it courage and strength. I am determined that He shall be my "guide even unto death," since He is the "wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

II. The Sun of Righteousness arose upon us "to guide our feet into the Way of Peace." Now, the oldest name for the Catholic Church is "the Way" (Acts ix:2, A. V. marg.). And from the Lord's prophet, speaking by the Holy Spirit, there comes the command of Christ that I should seek this ancient Way of Peace. "Thus saith the Lord," are Jeremiah's words, "ask for the *old* paths, where is the good way, and walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls.

III. How careful we are to safeguard our rapid, modern modes of locomotion! Expert men are required to spend their days walking the railroad tracks, in order that every inch may be scrupulously examined. Ordinarily one of them is discharged immediately, if he overlooks a single break or even fracture in the rails. How much more care-

ful ought I to be of "the Way" by which I carry home to God the precious freight of an immortal soul!

Ad majorem Dei gloriam!

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